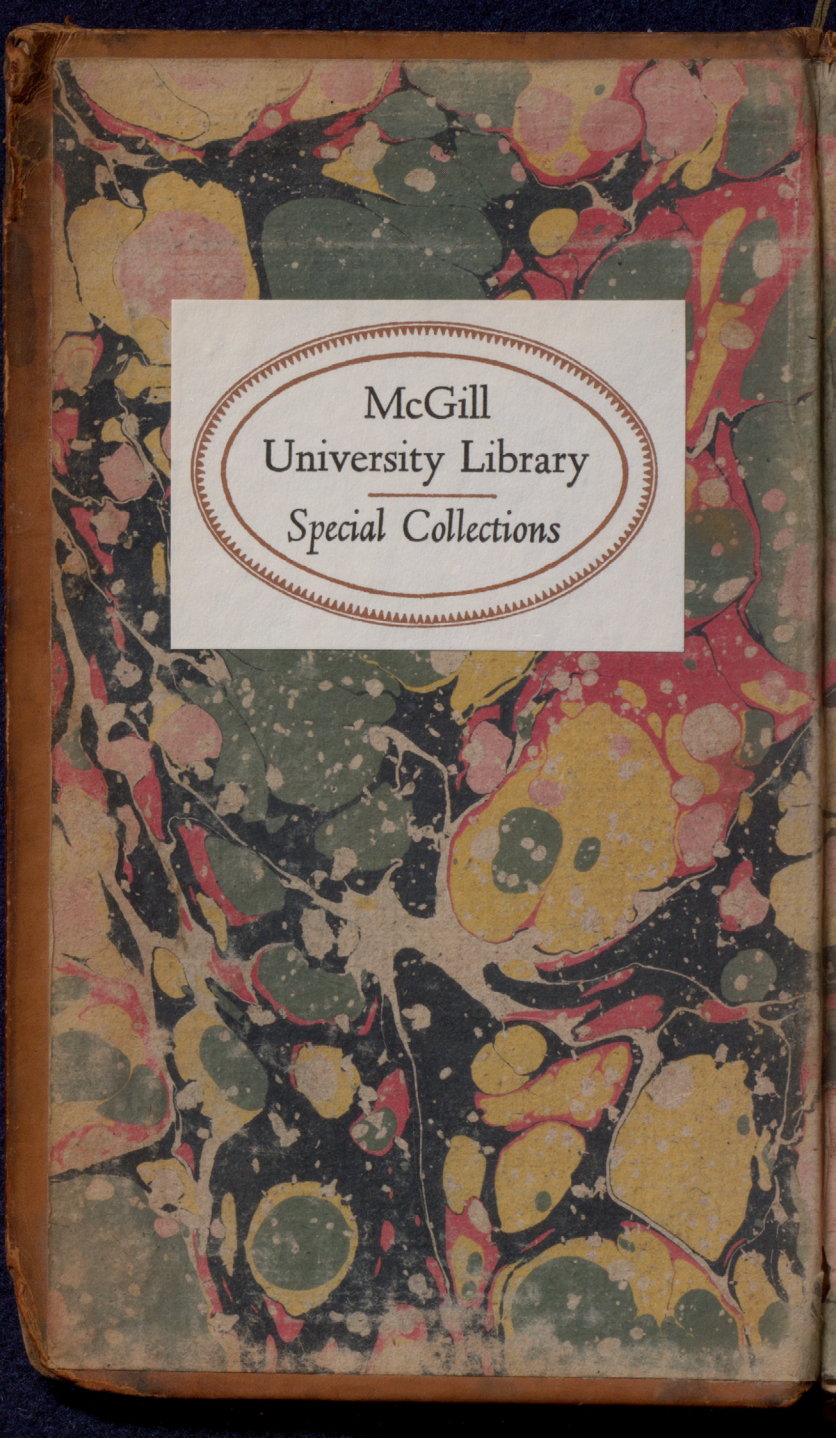
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EVELINA.

Oh author of my being!—far more dear
To me than light, than nourishment, or rest.

Francina Elizabetha Fletcher's
gift to M.E.A. Julian. — 1813

EVELINA,

OR, A

YOUNG LADY'S

ENTRANCE

INTO THE

WORLD.

IN A SERIES OF LETTERS.

THE SECOND EDITION.

VOL. I.

LONDON:

Printed for T. LOWNDES, N° 77, in FLEET-STREET.

M.DCC.LXXIX.

To —— ——.

OH author of my being!—far more dear
To me than light, than nouriſhment, or reſt,
Hygieia's bleſſings, Rapture's burning tear,
Or the life blood that mantles in my breaſt!

If in my heart the love of Virtue glows,
'Twas planted there by an unerring rule;
From thy example the pure flame aroſe,
Thy life, my precept—thy good works, my ſchool.

Could my weak pow'rs thy num'rous virtues trace,
By filial love each fear ſhould be repreſs'd;
The bluſh of Incapacity I'd chace,
And ſtand, recorder of thy worth, confeſs'd:

But ſince my niggard ſtars that gift refuſe,
Concealment is the only boon I claim;
Obſcure be ſtill the unſucceſsful Muſe,
Who cannot raiſe, but would not ſink, thy fame.

Oh!

Oh! of my life at once the source and joy!
If e'er thy eyes these feeble lines survey,
Let not their folly their intent destroy;
Accept the tribute—but forget the lay.

TO

TO THE

AUTHORS

OF THE

MONTHLY and CRITICAL REVIEWS.

GENTLEMEN,

THE liberty which I take in addreſſing to You the trifling production of a few idle hours, will, doubtleſs, move your wonder, and, probably, your contempt. I will not, however, with the futility of apologies, intrude upon your time, but briefly acknowledge the motives of my teme-

rity: leſt, by a premature exerciſe of that patience which I hope will befriend me, I ſhould leſſen its benevolence, and be acceſſary to my own condemnation.

Without name, without recommendation, and unknown alike to ſucceſs and diſgrace, to whom can I ſo properly apply for patronage, as to thoſe who publicly profeſs themſelves Inſpectors of all literary performances?

The extenſive plan of your critical obſervations,—which, not confined to works of utility or ingenuity, is equally open to thoſe of frivolous amuſement,—and yet worſe than frivolous dullneſs,—encourages me to ſeek for your protection, ſince,—perhaps for my ſins!—it entitles me to your annotations. To preſent, therefore, this offering, however inſignificant, would ill become the univerſality of your undertaking, though not to deſpiſe it may, alas! be out of your power.

The language of adulation, and the incenſe of flattery, though the natural inheritance, and conſtant reſource, from time

time immemorial, of the Dedicator, to me offer nothing but the wiſtful regret that I dare not invoke their aid. Siniſter views would be imputed to all I could ſay; ſince, thus ſituated, to extol your judgment, would ſeem the effect of art, and to celebrate your impartiality, be attributed to ſuſpecting it.

As Magiſtrates of the preſs, and Cenſors for the public,—to which you are bound by the ſacred ties of integrity to exert the moſt ſpirited impartiality, and to which your ſuffrages ſhould carry the marks of pure, dauntleſs, irrefragable truth—to appeal for your MERCY, were to ſolicit your diſhonour; and therefore,—though 'tis ſweeter than frankincenſe,—more grateful to the ſenſes than all the odorous perfumes of Arabia,—and though

> It droppeth like the gentle rain from heaven
> Upon the place beneath, ———

I court it not! to your juſtice alone I am entitled, and by that I muſt abide. Your engagements are not to the ſup-

plicating author, but to the candid public, which will not fail to crave

The penalty and forfeit of your bond.

No hackneyed writer, inured to abuſe, and callous to criticiſm, here braves your ſeverity;—neither does a half-ſtarv'd garretteer,

Oblig'd by hunger—and requeſt of friends,—

implore your lenity: your examination will be alike unbiaſſed by partiality and prejudice:—no refractory murmuring will follow your cenſure, no private intereſt be gratified by your praiſe.

Let not the anxious ſolicitude with which I recommend myſelf to your notice, expoſe me to your deriſion. Remember, Gentlemen, you were all young writers once, and the moſt experienced veteran of your corps, may, by recollecting his firſt publication, renovate his firſt terrors, and learn to allow for mine. For, though Courage is one of the nobleſt virtues of this nether ſphere, and, though ſcarcely more requiſite in the field of battle, to guard

the

the fighting hero from disgrace, than in the private commerce of the world, to ward off that littleness of soul which leads, by steps imperceptible, to all the base train of the inferior passions, and by which the too timid mind is betrayed into a servility derogatory to the dignity of human nature; yet is it a virtue of no necessity in a situation such as mine; a situation which removes, even from cowardice itself, the sting of ignominy;—for surely that courage may easily be dispensed with, which would rather excite disgust than admiration! Indeed, it is the peculiar privilege of an author, to rob terror of contempt, and pusillanimity of reproach.

Here let me rest,—and snatch myself, while I yet am able, from the fascination of EGOTISM,—a monster who has more votaries than ever did homage to the most popular deity of antiquity; and whose singular quality is, that while he excites a blind and involuntary adoration in almost every individual, his influence is universally disallowed, his power universally contemned, and his

worſhip, even by his followers, never mentioned but with abhorrence.

In addreſſing you jointly, I mean but to mark the generous ſentiments by which liberal criticiſm, to the utter annihilation of envy, jealouſy, and all ſelfiſh views, ought to be diſtinguiſhed.

I have the honour to be,

GENTLEMEN,

Your moſt obedient

Humble ſervant,

* * * * * * * *

PREFACE.

IN the republic of letters, there is no member of ſuch inferior rank, or who is ſo much diſdained by his brethren of the quill, as the humble Noveliſt: nor is his fate leſs hard in the world at large, ſince, among the whole claſs of writers, perhaps not one can be named of which the votaries are more numerous but leſs reſpectable.

Yet, while in the annals of thoſe few of our predeceſſors, to whom this ſpecies of writing is indebted for being ſaved from contempt, and reſcued from depravity, we can trace ſuch names as Rouſſeau, Johnſon, Marivaux, Fielding, Richardſon,*

* However ſuperior the capacities in which theſe great writers deſerve to be conſidered, they muſt pardon me that, for the dignity of my ſubject, I here rank the authors of Raſſelas and Eloïſe as Noveliſts.

chardſon, and Smollet, no man need bluſh at ſtarting from the ſame poſt, though many, nay, moſt men, may ſigh at finding themſelves diſtanced.

The following letters are preſented to the public—for ſuch, by novel writers, novel readers will be called,—with a very ſingular mixture of timidity and confidence, reſulting from the peculiar ſituation of the editor; who, though trembling for their ſucceſs from a conſciouſneſs of their imperfections, yet fears not being involved in their diſgrace, while happily wrapped up in a mantle of impenetrable obſcurity.

To draw characters from nature, though not from life, and to mark the manners of the times, is the attempted plan of the following letters. For this purpoſe, a young female, educated in the moſt ſecluded retirement, makes, at the age of ſeventeen, her firſt appearance upon the great and buſy ſtage of life; with a virtuous mind, a cultivated underſtanding, and a feeling heart, her ignorance of the forms, and inexperience in the manners, of the world, occaſion all the little incidents which theſe volumes record, and which form the natural progreſſion of the life of a young woman of obſcure birth, but conſpicuous beauty, for the firſt ſix months after her Entrance into the world.

Perhaps were it poſſible to effect the total extirpation of novels, our young ladies in general,

ral, and boarding school damsels in particular, might profit from their annihilation: but since the distemper they have spread seems incurable, since their contagion bids defiance to the medicine of advice or reprehension, and since they are found to baffle all the mental art of physic, save what is prescribed by the slow regimen of Time, and bitter diet of Experience, surely all attempts to contribute to the number of those which may be read, if not with advantage, at least without injury, ought rather to be encouraged than contemned.

Let me, therefore, prepare for disappointment those who, in the perusal of these sheets, entertain the gentle expectation of being transported to the fantastic regions of Romance, where Fiction is coloured by all the gay tints of luxurious Imagination, where Reason is an outcast, and where the sublimity of the Marvellous, *rejects all aid from sober Probability. The heroine of these memoirs, young, artless, and inexperienced, is*

No faultless Monster, that the world ne'er saw,

but the offspring of Nature, and of Nature in her simplest attire.

In all the Arts, the value of copies can only be proportioned to the scarceness of originals: among sculptors and painters, a fine statue, or a beautiful picture, of some great master, may deservedly employ the imitative talents of younger and inferior artists, that their appropriation to

one

one spot, may not wholly prevent the more general expansion of their excellence; but, among authors, the reverse is the case, since the noblest productions of literature, are almost equally attainable with the meanest. In books, therefore, imitation cannot be shunned too sedulously; for the very perfection of a model which is frequently seen, serves but more forcibly to mark the inferiority of a copy.

To avoid what is common, without adopting what is unnatural, must limit the ambition of the vulgar herd of authors: however zealous, therefore, my veneration of the great writers I have mentioned, however I may feel myself enlightened by the knowledge of Johnson, charmed with the eloquence of Rousseau, softened by the pathetic powers of Richardson, and exhilarated by the wit of Fielding, and humour of Smollet; I yet presume not to attempt pursuing the same ground which they have tracked; whence, though they may have cleared the weeds, they have also culled the flowers, and though they have rendered the path plain, they have left it barren.

The candour of my readers, I have not the impertinence to doubt, and to their indulgence, I am sensible I have no claim: I have, therefore, only to entreat, that my own words may not pronounce my condemnation, and that what I have here ventured to say in regard to imitation, may be understood, as it is meant, in a general

neral ſenſe, and not be imputed to an opinion of my own originality, which I have not the vanity, the folly, or the blindneſs, to entertain.

Whatever may be the fate of theſe letters, the editor is ſatisfied they will meet with juſtice; and commits them to the preſs, though hopeleſs of fame, yet not regardleſs of cenſure.

EVELINA.

LETTER I.

Lady Howard to the Rev. Mr. Villars.

Howard Grove, Kent.

CAN any thing, my good Sir, be more painful to a friendly mind, than a neceſſity of communicating diſagreeable intelligence? Indeed, it is ſometimes difficult to determine, whether the relator or the receiver of evil tidings is moſt to be pitied.

I have juſt had a letter from Madame Duval; ſhe is totally at a loſs in what manner to behave; ſhe ſeems deſirous to repair the wrongs ſhe has done, yet wiſhes the world to believe her blameleſs. She

would fain caſt upon another the odium of thoſe misfortunes for which ſhe alone is anſwerable. Her letter is violent, ſometimes abuſive, and that of *you!—you*, to whom ſhe is under obligations which are greater even than her faults, but to whoſe advice ſhe wickedly imputes all the ſufferings of her much-injured daughter, the late Lady Belmont. The chief purport of her writing I will acquaint you with; the letter itſelf is not worthy your notice.

She tells me that ſhe has, for many years paſt, been in continual expectation of making a journey to England, which prevented her writing for information concerning this melancholy ſubject, by giving her hopes of making perſonal enquiries; but family occurrences have ſtill detained her in France, which country ſhe now ſees no proſpect of quitting. She has, therefore, lately uſed her utmoſt endeavours to obtain a faithful account of whatever related to her *ill-adviſed* daughter; the reſult of which giving her *ſome reaſon* to apprehend that, upon her death-bed, ſhe bequeathed an infant orphan to the world, ſhe moſt graciouſly ſays, that if *you*, with whom *ſhe underſtands* the child is placed, will procure authentic proofs of its relationſhip to her, you may ſend it to Paris, where ſhe will properly provide for it.

This

This woman is, undoubtedly, at length, self-convicted of her most unnatural behaviour: it is evident, from her writing, that she is still as vulgar and illiterate as when her first husband, Mr. Evelyn, had the weakness to marry her; nor does she at all apologise for addressing herself to me, though I was only once in her company.

Her letter has excited in my daughter Mirvan, a strong desire to be informed of the motives which induced Madame Duval to abandon the unfortunate Lady Belmont, at a time when a mother's protection was peculiarly necessary for her peace and her reputation. Notwithstanding I was personally acquainted with all the parties concerned in that affair, the subject always appeared of too delicate a nature to be spoken of with the principals; I cannot, therefore, satisfy Mrs. Mirvan otherwise than by applying to you.

By saying that you *may* send the child, Madam Duval aims at *conferring*, where she most *owes* obligation. I pretend not to give you advice; you, to whose generous protection this helpless orphan is indebted for every thing, are the best and only judge of what she ought to do; but I am much concerned at the trouble and uneasiness which this unworthy woman may occasion you.

My daughter and my grandchild join with me in desiring to be most kindly remembered to the amiable girl; and they bid me remind you, that the annual visit to Howard Grove, which we were formerly promised, has been discontinued for more than four years. I am, dear Sir,

with great regard,

Your most obedient friend and servant,

M. Howard.

LETTER II.

Mr. Villars to Lady Howard.

Berry Hill, Dorsetshire.

YOUR Ladyship did but too well foresee the perplexity and uneasiness of which Madame Duval's letter has been productive. However, I ought rather to be thankful that I have so many years remained unmolested, than repine at my present embarrassment; since it proves, at least, that this wretched woman is at length awakened to remorse.

In regard to my answer, I must humbly request your Ladyship to write to this effect: "That I would not, upon any account, intentionally offend Madame Duval, but

but that I have weighty, nay unanſwerable reaſons for detaining her grand-daughter at preſent in England; the principal of which is, that it was the earneſt deſire of one to whoſe Will ſhe owes implicit duty. Madame Duval may be aſſured that ſhe meets with the utmoſt attention and tenderneſs; that her education, however ſhort of my wiſhes, almoſt exceeds my abilities; and I flatter myſelf, when the time arrives that ſhe ſhall pay her duty to her grandmother, Madame Duval will find no reaſon to be diſſatisfied with what has been done for her."

Your Ladyſhip will not, I am ſure, be ſurpriſed at this anſwer. Madame Duval is by no means a proper companion or guardian for a young woman: ſhe is at once uneducated and unprincipled; ungentle in her temper, and unamiable in her manners. I have long known that ſhe has perſuaded herſelf to harbour an averſion for me—Unhappy woman! I can only regard her as an object of pity!

I dare not heſitate at a requeſt from Mrs. Mirvan, yet, in complying with it, I ſhall, for her own ſake, be as conciſe as I poſſibly can; ſince the cruel tranſactions which preceded the birth of my ward, can afford no entertainment to a mind ſo humane as her's.

Your Ladyſhip may probably have heard, that I had the honour to accompany Mr. Evelyn, the grandfather of my young charge, when upon his travels, in the capacity of a tutor. His unhappy marriage, immediately upon his return to England, with Madame Duval, then a waiting-girl at a tavern, contrary to the advice and entreaties of all his friends, among whom I was myſelf the moſt urgent, induced him to abandon his native land, and fix his abode in France. Thither he was followed by ſhame and repentance; feelings which his heart was not framed to ſupport: for, notwithſtanding he had been too weak to reſiſt the allurements of beauty, which nature, though a niggard to her of every other boon, had with a laviſh hand beſtowed on his wife; yet he was a young man of excellent character, and, till thus unaccountably infatuated, of unblemiſhed conduct. He ſurvived this ill-judged marriage but two years. Upon his death-bed, with an unſteady hand, he wrote me the following note:

"My friend! forget your reſentment, in favour of your humanity;—a father, trembling for the welfare of his child, bequeaths her to your care.—O Villars! hear! pity! and relieve me!"

Had

Had my circumſtances permitted me, I ſhould have anſwered theſe words by an immediate journey to Paris; but I was obliged to act by the agency of a friend, who was upon the ſpot, and preſent at the opening of the will.

Mr. Evelyn left to me a legacy of a thouſand pounds, and the ſole guardianſhip of his daughter's perſon till her eighteenth year, conjuring me, in the moſt affecting terms, to take the charge of her education till ſhe was able to act with propriety for herſelf; but in regard to fortune, he left her wholly dependent on her mother, to whoſe tenderneſs he earneſtly recommended her.

Thus, though he would not, to a woman low-bred and illiberal as Mrs. Evelyn, truſt the conduct and morals of his daughter, he nevertheleſs thought proper to ſecure to her the reſpect and duty which, from her own child, were certainly her due; but, unhappily, it never occurred to him that the mother, on her part, could fail in affection or juſtice.

Miſs Evelyn, Madam, from the ſecond to the eighteenth year of her life, was brought up under my care, and, except when at ſchool, under my roof. I need not ſpeak to your Ladyſhip of the virtues of that excellent young creature. She

loved me as her father; nor was Mrs. Villars less valued by her; while to me she became so dear, that her loss was little less afflicting than that which I have since sustained of Mrs. Villars herself.

At that period of her life we parted; her mother, then married to Monsieur Duval, sent for her to Paris. How often have I since regretted that I did not accompany her thither! protected and supported by me, the misery and disgrace which awaited her, might, perhaps, have been avoided. But, to be brief—Madame Duval, at the instigation of her husband, earnestly, or rather tyrannically, endeavoured to effect a union between Miss Evelyn and one of his nephews. And, when she found her power inadequate to her attempt, enraged at her non-compliance, she treated her with the grossest unkindness, and threatened her with poverty and ruin.

Miss Evelyn, to whom wrath and violence had hitherto been strangers, soon grew weary of such usage; and rashly, and without a witness, consented to a private marriage with Sir John Belmont, a very profligate young man, who had but too successfully found means to insinuate himself into her favour. He promised to conduct her to England—he did.——O, Madam, you know the rest!—Disappointed of the

fortune he expected, by the inexorable rancour of the Duvals, he infamously burnt the certificate of their marriage, and denied that they had ever been united!

She flew to me for protection. With what mixed transports of joy and anguish did I again see her! By my advice she endeavoured to procure proofs of her marriage;—but in vain: her credulity had been no match for his art.

Every body believed her innocent, from the guiltless tenor of her unspotted youth, and from the known libertinism of her barbarous betrayer. Yet her sufferings were too acute for her tender frame, and the same moment that gave birth to her infant, put an end at once to the sorrows and the life of its mother.

The rage of Madame Duval at her elopement, abated not while this injured victim of cruelty yet drew breath. She probably intended, in time, to have pardoned her, but time was not allowed. When she was informed of her death, I have been told, that the agonies of grief and remorse, with which she was seized, occasioned her a severe fit of illness. But, from the time of her recovery to the date of her letter to your Ladyship, I had never heard that she manifested any desire to be made acquainted with the circumstances

which attended the death of Lady Belmont, and the birth of her helpleſs child.

That child, Madam, ſhall never, while life is lent me, know the loſs ſhe has ſuſtained. I have cheriſhed, ſuccoured, and ſupported her, from her earlieſt infancy to her ſixteenth year; and ſo amply has ſhe repaid my care and affection, that my fondeſt wiſh is now circumſcribed by the deſire of beſtowing her on one who may be ſenſible of her worth, and then ſinking to eternal reſt in her arms.

Thus it has happened that the education of the father, daughter, and grand-daughter, has devolved on me. What infinite miſery have the two firſt cauſed me! Should the fate of the dear ſurvivor be equally adverſe, how wretched will be the end of my cares—the end of my days!

Even had Madame Duval merited the charge ſhe claims, I fear my fortitude would have been unequal to ſuch a parting; but, being ſuch as ſhe is, not only my affection, but my humanity recoils, at the barbarous idea of deſerting the ſacred truſt repoſed in me. Indeed, I could but ill ſupport her former yearly viſits to the reſpectable manſion at Howard Grove; pardon me, dear Madam, and do not think me inſenſible of the honour which your Ladyſhip's condeſcenſion confers upon us both; but ſo deep

is the impreſſion which the misfortunes of her mother have made on my heart, that ſhe does not, even for a moment, quit my ſight, without exciting apprehenſions and terrors which almoſt overpower me. Such, Madam, is my tenderneſs, and ſuch my weakneſs!—But ſhe is the only tie I have upon earth, and I truſt to your Ladyſhip's goodneſs not to judge of my feelings with ſeverity.

I beg leave to preſent my humble reſpects to Mrs. and Miſs Mirvan; and have the honour to be,

Madam,
Your Ladyſhip's moſt obedient
and moſt humble ſervant,
ARTHUR VILLARS.

LETTER III.

[Written ſome months after the laſt.]

Lady Howard to the Rev. Mr. Villars.

Howard Grove, March 8.

Dear and Rev. Sir,

YOUR laſt letter gave me infinite pleaſure: after ſo long and tedious an ill-

neſs, how grateful to yourſelf and to your friends muſt be your returning health! You have the hearty wiſhes of every individual of this place for its continuance and increaſe.

Will you not think I take advantage of your acknowledged recovery, if I once more venture to mention your pupil and Howard Grove together? Yet you muſt remember the patience with which we ſubmitted to your deſire of not parting with her during the bad ſtate of your health, though it was with much reluctance we forbore to ſolicit her company. My grand-daughter, in particular, has ſcarce been able to repreſs her eagerneſs to again meet the friend of her infancy; and for my own part, it is very ſtrongly my wiſh to manifeſt the regard I had for the unfortunate Lady Belmont, by proving ſerviceable to her child; which ſeems to me the beſt reſpect that can be paid to her memory. Permit me, therefore, to lay before you a plan which Mrs. Mirvan and I have formed, in conſequence of your reſtoration to health.

I would not frighten you;—but do you think you could bear to part with your young companion for two or three months? Mrs. Mirvan propoſes to ſpend the enſuing ſpring in London, whither, for the firſt time, my grandchild will accompany her: Now,

Now, my good friend, it is very earneſtly their wiſh to enlarge and enliven their party by the addition of your amiable ward, who would ſhare, equally with her own daughter, the care and attention of Mrs. Mirvan. Do not ſtart at this propoſal; it is time that ſhe ſhould ſee ſomething of the world. When young people are too rigidly ſequeſtered from it, their lively and romantic imaginations paint it to them as a paradiſe of which they have been beguiled; but when they are ſhown it properly, and in due time, they ſee it ſuch as it really is, equally ſhared by pain and pleaſure, hope and diſappointment.

You have nothing to apprehend from her meeting with Sir John Belmont, as that abandoned man is now abroad, and not expected home this year.

Well, my good Sir, what ſay you to our ſcheme? I hope it will meet with your approbation; but if it ſhould not, be aſſured I can never object to any deciſion of one who is ſo much reſpected and eſteemed as Mr. Villars, by

His moſt faithful humble ſervant,

M. Howard.

LETTER

LETTER IV.

Mr. Villars to Lady Howard.

Berry Hill, March 12.

I AM grieved, Madam, to appear obſtinate, and I bluſh to incur the imputation of ſelfiſhneſs. In detaining my young charge thus long with myſelf in the country, I conſulted not ſolely my own inclination. Deſtined, in all probability, to poſſeſs a very moderate fortune, I wiſhed to contract her views to ſomething within it. The mind is but too naturally prone to pleaſure, but too eaſily yielded to diſſipation: it has been my ſtudy to guard her againſt their deluſions, by preparing her to expect,—and to deſpiſe them. But the time draws on for experience and obſervation to take place of inſtruction: if I have, in ſome meaſure, rendered her capable of uſing one with diſcretion, and making the other with improvement, I ſhall rejoice myſelf with the aſſurance of having largely contributed to her welfare. She is now of an age that happineſs is eager to attend,—let her then enjoy it! I commit her to the protection of your Ladyſhip, and only hope ſhe may be found worthy half the goodneſs I am ſatisfied ſhe will meet with at your hoſpitable manſion.

Thus far, Madam, I chearfully ſubmit to your deſire. In confiding my ward to the care of Lady Howard, I can feel no uneaſineſs from her abſence, but what will ariſe from the loſs of her company, ſince I ſhall be as well convinced of her ſafety as if ſhe were under my own roof;—but, can your Ladyſhip be ſerious in propoſing to introduce her to the gaieties of a London life? Permit me to aſk, for what end, or what purpoſe? A youthful mind is ſeldom totally free from ambition; to curb that, is the firſt ſtep to contentment, ſince to diminiſh expectation, is to increaſe enjoyment. I apprehend nothing more than too much raiſing her hopes and her views, which the natural vivacity of her diſpoſition would render but too eaſy to effect. The town-acquaintance of Mrs. Mirvan are all in the circle of high life; this artleſs young creature, with too much beauty to eſcape notice, has too much ſenſibility to be indifferent to it; but ſhe has too little wealth to be ſought with propriety by men of the faſhionable world.

Conſider, Madam, the peculiar cruelty of her ſituation; only child of a wealthy Baronet, whoſe perſon ſhe has never ſeen, whoſe character ſhe has reaſon to abhor, and whoſe name ſhe is forbidden to claim; entitled as ſhe is to lawfully inherit his fortune and eſtate,

eſtate, is there any probability that he will *properly* own her? And while he continues to perſevere in diſavowing his marriage with Miſs Evelyn, ſhe ſhall never, at the expence of her mother's honour, receive a part of her right, as the donation of his bounty.

And as to Mr. Evelyn's eſtate, I have no doubt but that Madame Duval and her relations will diſpoſe of it among themſelves.

It ſeems, therefore, as if this deſerted child, though legally heireſs of two large fortunes, muſt owe all her rational expectations to adoption and friendſhip. Yet her income will be ſuch as may make her happy, if ſhe is diſpoſed to be ſo in private life; though it will by no means allow her to enjoy the luxury of a London fine lady.

Let Miſs Mirvan, then, Madam, ſhine in all the ſplendor of high life; but ſuffer my child ſtill to enjoy the pleaſures of humble retirement, with a mind to which greater views are unknown.

I hope this reaſoning will be honoured with your approbation; and I have yet another motive which has ſome weight with me; I would not willingly give offence to any human being, and ſurely Madame Duval might accuſe me of injuſtice, if, while I refuſe to let her grand-daughter wait upon her, I conſent that ſhe ſhould join a party of pleaſure to London.

In

In sending her to Howard Grove, not one of these scruples arise; and therefore Mrs. Clinton, a most worthy woman, formerly her nurse, and now my housekeeper, shall attend her thither next week.

Though I have always called her by the name of Anville, and reported in this neighbourhood that her father, my intimate friend, left her to my guardianship, yet I have thought it necessary she should herself be acquainted with the melancholy circumstances attending her birth; for, though I am very desirous of guarding her from curiosity and impertinence, by concealing her name, family, and story, yet I would not leave it in the power of chance, to shock her gentle nature with a tale of so much sorrow.

You must not, Madam, expect too much from my pupil. She is quite a little rustic, and knows nothing of the world; and though her education has been the best I could bestow in this retired place, to which Dorchester, the nearest town, is seven miles distant, yet I shall not be surprised if you should discover in her a thousand deficiencies of which I have never dreamt. She must be very much altered since she was last at Howard Grove,—but I will say nothing to her; I leave her to your Lady-

ship's

ſhip's own obſervations, of which I beg a faithful relation; and am,

Dear Madam, with great reſpect,
Your obedient and moſt humble ſervant,
ARTHUR VILLARS.

LETTER V.

Mr. Villars to Lady Howard.

March 18.

Dear Madam,

THIS letter will be delivered to you by my child,—the child of my adoption,—my affection! Unbleſt with one natural friend, ſhe merits a thouſand. I ſend her to you, innocent as an angel, and artleſs as purity itſelf: and I ſend you with her the heart of your friend, the only hope he has on earth, the ſubject of his tendereſt thoughts, and the object of his lateſt cares. She is one, Madam, for whom alone I have lately wiſhed to live; and ſhe is one whom to ſerve I would with tranſport die! Reſtore her but to me all innocence as you receive her, and the fondeſt hope of my heart will be amply gratified.

A. VILLARS.

LETTER

LETTER VI.

Lady Howard to the Rev. Mr. Villars.

Howard Grove.

Dear and Rev. Sir,

THE ſolemn manner in which you have committed your child to my care, has in ſome meaſure dampt the pleaſure which I receive from the truſt, as it makes me fear that you ſuffer from your compliance, in which caſe I ſhall very ſincerely blame myſelf for the earneſtneſs with which I have requeſted this favour; but remember, my good Sir, ſhe is within a few days ſummons, and be aſſured I will not detain her a moment longer than you wiſh.

You deſire my opinion of her.

She is a little angel! I cannot wonder that you ſought to monopolize her. Neither ought you, at finding it impoſſible.

Her face and perſon anſwer my moſt refined ideas of complete beauty: and this, though a ſubject of praiſe leſs important to you, or to me, than any other, is yet ſo ſtriking, it is not poſſible to paſs it unnoticed. Had I not known from whom ſhe received her education, I ſhould, at firſt ſight of ſo perfect a face, have been in pain for

for her understanding; since it has been long and justly remarked, that folly has ever sought alliance with beauty.

She has the same gentleness in her manners, the same natural grace in her motions, that I formerly so much admired in her mother. Her character seems truly ingenuous and simple; and, at the same time that nature has blessed her with an excellent understanding, and great quickness of parts, she has a certain air of inexperience and innocency that is extremely interesting.

You have no reason to regret the retirement in which she has lived; since that politeness which is acquired by an acquaintance with high life, is in her so well supplied by a natural desire of obliging, joined to a deportment infinitely engaging.

I observe with great satisfaction a growing affection between this amiable girl and my grand-daughter, whose heart is as free from selfishness or conceit, as that of her young friend is from all guile. Their regard may be mutually useful, since much is to be expected from emulation, where nothing is to be feared from envy. I would have them love each other as sisters, and reciprocally supply the place of that tender and happy relationship, to which neither of them have a natural claim.

Be

Be satisfied, my good Sir, that your child shall meet with the same attention as our own. We all join in most hearty wishes for your health and happiness, and in returning our sincere thanks for the favour you have conferred on us.

I am, Dear Sir,
Your most faithful servant,
M. HOWARD.

LETTER VII.

Lady Howard to the Rev. Mr. Villars.

Howard Grove, March 26.

BE not alarmed, my worthy friend, at my so speedily troubling you again; I seldom use the ceremony of waiting for answers, or writing with any regularity, and I have at present immediate occasion for begging your patience.

Mrs. Mirvan has just received a letter from her long-absent husband, containing the welcome news of his hoping to reach London by the beginning of next week. My daughter and the Captain have been separated almost seven years, and it would therefore be needless to say what joy, sur-

priſe, and conſequently confuſion, his, at preſent, unexpected return has cauſed at Howard Grove. Mrs. Mirvan, you cannot doubt, will go inſtantly to town to meet him; her daughter is under a thouſand obligations to attend her; I grieve that her mother cannot.

And now, my good Sir, I almoſt bluſh to proceed;—but, tell me, may I aſk—will you permit—that your child may accompany them? Do not think us unreaſonable, but conſider the many inducements which conſpire to make London the happieſt place at preſent ſhe can be in. The joyful occaſion of the journey; the gaiety of the whole party; oppoſed to the dull life ſhe muſt lead if left here, with a ſolitary old woman for her ſole companion, while ſhe ſo well knows the chearfulneſs and felicity enjoyed by the reſt of the family,—are circumſtances that ſeem to merit your conſideration: Mrs. Mirvan deſires me to aſſure you, that one week is all ſhe aſks, as ſhe is certain that the Captain, who hates London, will be eager to reviſit Howard Grove: and Maria is ſo very earneſt in wiſhing to have the company of her friend, that, if you are inexorable, ſhe will be deprived of half the pleaſure ſhe otherwiſe hopes to receive.

However, I will not, my good Sir, deceive you into an opinion that they intend

to

to live in a retired manner, as that cannot be fairly expected. But you have no reason to be uneasy concerning Madame Duval; she has not any correspondent in England, and obtains no intelligence but by common report. She must be a stranger to the name your child bears; and, even should she hear of this excursion, so short a time as a week, or less, spent in town upon so particular an occasion, though previous to their meeting, cannot be construed into disrespect to herself.

Mrs. Mirvan desires me to assure you, that if you will oblige her, her *two* children shall equally share her time and her attention. She has sent a commission to a friend in town to take a house for her, and while she waits for an answer concerning it, I shall for one from you to our petition. However, your child is writing herself, and that, I doubt not, will more avail than all we can possibly urge.

My daughter desires her best compliments to you, *if*, she says, you will grant her request, but *not else*.

Adieu, my dear Sir,—we all hope every thing from your goodness.

M. Howard.

LETTER

LETTER VIII.

Evelina to the Rev. Mr. Villars.

Howard Grove, March 26.

THIS houſe ſeems to be the houſe of joy; every face wears a ſmile, and a laugh is at every body's ſervice. It is quite amuſing to walk about, and ſee the general confuſion; a room leading to the garden is fitting up for Captain Mirvan's ſtudy. Lady Howard does not ſit a moment in a place; Miſs Mirvan is making caps; every body ſo buſy!—ſuch flying from room to room!—ſo many orders given, and retracted, and given again!—nothing but hurry and perturbation.

Well but, my dear Sir, I am deſired to make a requeſt to you. I hope you will not think me an incroacher; Lady Howard inſiſts upon my writing!—yet I hardly know how to go on; a petition implies a want,—and have you left me one? No, indeed.

I am half aſhamed of myſelf for beginning this letter. But theſe dear ladies are ſo preſſing—I cannot, for my life, reſiſt wiſhing for the pleaſures they offer me,—provided you do not diſapprove them.

They

They are to make a very short stay in town. The Captain will meet them in a day or two. Mrs. Mirvan and her sweet daughter both go;—what a happy party! Yet I am not *very* eager to accompany them: at least, I shall be contented to remain where I am, if you desire that I should.

Assured, my dearest Sir, of your goodness, your bounty, and your indulgent kindness, ought I to form a wish that has not your sanction? Decide for me, therefore, without the least apprehension that I shall be uneasy, or discontented. While I am yet in suspense, perhaps I may *hope*, but I am most certain, that when you have once determined, I shall not repine.

They tell me that London is now in full splendour. Two Play-houses are open,—the Opera-house,—Ranelagh,—and the Pantheon.—You see I have learned all their names. However, pray don't suppose that I make any point of going, for I shall hardly sigh to see them depart without me; though I shall probably never meet with such another opportunity. And, indeed, their domestic happiness will be so great,—it is natural to wish to partake of it.

I believe I am bewitched! I made a resolution when I began, that I would not be urgent; but my pen—or rather my thoughts,

will not ſuffer me to keep it—for I acknowledge, I muſt acknowledge, I cannot help wiſhing for your permiſſion.

I almoſt repent already that I have made this confeſſion; pray forget that you have read it, if this journey is diſpleaſing to you. But I will not write any longer; for the more I think of this affair, the leſs indifferent to it I find myſelf.

Adieu, my moſt honoured, moſt reverenced, moſt beloved father! for by what other name can I call you? I have no happineſs or ſorrow, no hope or fear, but what your kindneſs beſtows, or your diſpleaſure may cauſe. You will not, I am ſure, ſend a refuſal, without reaſons unanſwerable, and therefore I ſhall chearfully acquieſce. Yet I hope—I hope you will be able to permit me to go! I am,

With the utmoſt affection,
gratitude, and duty,
Your
EVELINA ———.

I cannot to *you* ſign *Anville*, and what other name may I claim?

LETTER

LETTER IX.

Mr. Villars to Evelina.

Berry-Hill, March 28.

TO reſiſt the urgency of entreaty, is a power which I have not yet acquired: I aim not at an authority which deprives you of liberty, yet I would fain guide myſelf by a prudence which ſhould ſave me the pangs of repentance. Your impatience to fly to a place which your imagination has painted to you in colours ſo attractive, ſurpriſes me not; I have only to hope that the livelineſs of your fancy may not deceive you: to refuſe, would be raiſing it ſtill higher. To ſee my Evelina happy, is to ſee myſelf without a wiſh: go then, my child, and may that Heaven which alone can, direct, preſerve, and ſtrengthen you! To That, my love, will I daily offer prayers for your felicity; O may it guard, watch over you! defend you from danger, ſave you from diſtreſs, and keep vice as diſtant from your perſon as from your heart! And to Me, may it grant the ultimate bleſſing of cloſing theſe aged eyes in the arms of one ſo dear—ſo deſervedly beloved!

ARTHUR VILLARS.

LETTER X.

Evelina to the Rev. Mr. Villars.

Queen-Ann-Street, London, Saturday April 2.

THIS moment arrived. Juſt going to Drury-Lane theatre. The celebrated Mr. Garrick performs Ranger. I am quite in extaſy. So is Miſs Mirvan. How fortunate, that he ſhould happen to play! We would not let Mrs. Mirvan reſt till ſhe conſented to go; her chief objection was to our dreſs, for we have had no time to *Londonize* ourſelves; but we teized her into compliance, and ſo we are to ſit in ſome obſcure place, that ſhe may not be ſeen. As to me, I ſhould be alike unknown in the moſt conſpicuous or moſt private part of the houſe.

I can write no more now. I have hardly time to breathe—only juſt this, the houſes and ſtreets are not quite ſo ſuperb as I expected. However, I have ſeen nothing yet, ſo I ought not to judge.

Well, adieu, my deareſt Sir, for the preſent; I could not forbear writing a few words inſtantly on my arrival; though I ſuppoſe my letter of thanks for your conſent is ſtill on the road.

Saturday

Saturday Night.

O my dear Sir, in what raptures am I returned! Well may Mr. Garrick be ſo celebrated, ſo univerſally admired—I had not any idea of ſo great a performer.

Such eaſe! ſuch vivacity in his manner! ſuch grace in his motions! ſuch fire and meaning in his eyes!—I could hardly believe he had ſtudied a written part, for every word ſeemed to be uttered from the impulſe of the moment.

His action—at once ſo graceful and ſo free!—his voice—ſo clear, ſo melodious, yet ſo wonderfully various in its tones—ſuch animation!—every look *ſpeaks!*

I would have given the world to have had the whole play acted over again. And when he danced—O how I envied Clarinda! I almoſt wiſhed to have jumped on the ſtage and joined them.

I am afraid you will think me mad, ſo I won't ſay any more; yet I really believe Mr. Garrick would make you mad too, if you could ſee him. I intend to aſk Mrs. Mirvan to go to the play every night while we ſtay in town. She is extremely kind to me, and Maria, her charming daughter, is the ſweeteſt girl in the world.

I ſhall write to you every evening all that paſſes in the day, and that in the ſame manner as, if I could ſee, I ſhould tell you.

Sunday.

This morning we went to Portland chapel, and afterwards we walked in the Mall of St. James's Park, which by no means anſwered my expectations: it is a long ſtraight walk, of dirty gravel, very uneaſy to the feet; and at each end, inſtead of an open proſpect, nothing is to be ſeen but houſes built of brick. When Mrs. Mirvan pointed out the *Palace* to me—I think I was never much more ſurpriſed.

However, the walk was very agreeable to us; every body looked gay, and ſeemed pleaſed, and the ladies were ſo much dreſſed, that Miſs Mirvan and I could do nothing but look at them. Mrs. Mirvan met ſeveral of her friends. No wonder, for I never ſaw ſo many people aſſembled together before. I looked about for ſome of *my* acquaintance, but in vain, for I ſaw not one perſon that I knew, which is very odd, for all the world ſeemed there.

Mrs. Mirvan ſays we are not to walk in the Park again next Sunday, even if we ſhould be in town, becauſe there is better company in Kenſington Gardens. But really if you had ſeen how much every body was dreſſed, you would not think that poſſible.

Monday.

Monday.

We are to go this evening to a private ball, given by Mrs. Stanley, a very fashionable lady of Mrs. Mirvan's acquaintance.

We have been *a shopping*, as Mrs. Mirvan calls it, all this morning, to buy silks, caps, gauzes, and so forth.

The shops are really very entertaining, especially the mercers; there seem to be six or seven men belonging to each shop, and every one took care, by bowing and smirking, to be noticed; we were conducted from one to another, and carried from room to room, with so much ceremony, that at first I was almost afraid to go on.

I thought I should never have chosen a silk, for they produced so many I knew not which to fix upon, and they recommended them all so strongly, that I fancy they thought I only wanted persuasion to buy every thing they shewed me. And, indeed, they took so much trouble, that I was almost ashamed I could not.

At the milliners, the ladies we met were so much dressed, that I should rather have imagined they were making visits than purchases. But what most diverted me was, that we were more frequently served by men than by women; and such men! so finical, so affected! they seemed to understand every

part of a woman's dreſs better than we do ourſelves; and they recommended caps and ribbands with an air of ſo much importance, that I wiſhed to aſk them how long they had left off wearing them.

The diſpatch with which they work in theſe great ſhops is amazing, for they have promiſed me a compleat ſuit of linen againſt the evening.

I have juſt had my hair dreſſed. You cant't think howoddly my head feels; full of powder and black pins, and a great *cuſhion* on the top of it. I believe you would hardly know me, for my face looks quite different to what it did before my hair was dreſſed. When I ſhall be able to make uſe of a comb for myſelf I cannot tell, for my hair is ſo much entangled, *frizled* they call it, that I fear it will be very difficult.

I am half afraid of this ball to-night, for, you know, I have never danced but at ſchool; however, Miſs Mirvan ſays there is nothing in it. Yet I wiſh it was over.

Adieu, my dear Sir; pray excuſe the wretched ſtuff I write, perhaps I may improve by being in this town, and then my letters will be leſs unworthy your reading. Mean time I am,

Your dutiful and affectionate,
though unpoliſhed,
EVELINA.

Poor

Poor Miſs Mirvan cannot wear one of the caps ſhe made, becauſe they dreſs her hair too large for them.

LETTER XI.

Evelina in continuation.

Queen-Ann-Street, April 5, Tueſday Morning.

I HAVE a vaſt deal to ſay, and ſhall give all this morning to my pen. As to my plan of writing every evening the adventures of the day, I find it impracticable; for the diverſions here are ſo very late, that if I begin my letters after them, I could not go to bed at all.

We paſt a moſt extraordinary evening. A *private* ball this was called, ſo I expected to have ſeen about four or five couple; but Lord! my dear Sir, I believe I ſaw half the world! Two very large rooms were full of company; in one, were cards for the elderly ladies, and in the other, were the dancers. My mamma Mirvan, for ſhe always calls me her child, ſaid ſhe would ſit with Maria and me till we were provided with partners, and then join the card-players.

The gentlemen, as they paſſed and re-

paſſed, looked as if they thought we were quite at their diſpoſal, and only waiting for the honour of their commands; and they ſauntered about, in a careleſs indolent manner, as if with a view to keep us in ſuſpenſe. I don't ſpeak of this in regard to Miſs Mirvan and myſelf only, but to the ladies in general; and I thought it ſo provoking, that I determined, in my own mind, that, far from humouring ſuch airs, I would rather not dance at all, than with any one who ſhould ſeem to think me ready to accept the firſt partner who would condeſcend to take me.

Not long after, a young man, who had for ſome time looked at us with a kind of negligent impertinence, advanced, on tip-toe, towards me; he had a ſet ſmile on his face, and his dreſs was ſo foppiſh, that I really believe he even wiſhed to be ſtared at; and yet he was very ugly.

Bowing almoſt to the ground, with a ſort of ſwing, and waving his hand with the greateſt conceit, after a ſhort and ſilly pauſe, he ſaid, "Madam—may I preſume?"—and ſtopt, offering to take my hand. I drew it back, but could ſcarce forbear laughing. "Allow me, Madam," (continued he, affectedly breaking off every half moment) "the honour and happineſs —if I am not ſo unhappy as to addreſs you

too

too late—to have the happineſs and honour——"

Again he would have taken my hand, but, bowing my head, I begged to be excuſed, and turned to Miſs Mirvan to conceal my laughter. He then deſired to know if I had already engaged myſelf to ſome more fortunate man? I ſaid No, and that I believed I ſhould not dance at all. He would keep himſelf, he told me, diſengaged, in hopes I ſhould relent; and then, uttering ſome ridiculous ſpeeches of ſorrow and diſappointment, though his face ſtill wore the ſame invariable ſmile, he retreated.

It ſo happened, as we have ſince recollected, that during this little dialogue, Mrs. Mirvan was converſing with the lady of the houſe. And very ſoon after another gentleman, who ſeemed about ſix-and-twenty years old, gayly, but not foppiſhly, dreſſed, and indeed extremely handſome, with an air of mixed politeneſs and gallantry, deſired to know if I was engaged, or would honour him with my hand. So he was pleaſed to ſay, though I am ſure I know not what honour he could receive from me; but theſe ſort of expreſſions, I find, are uſed as words of courſe, without any diſtinction of perſons, or ſtudy of propriety.

Well, I bowed, and I am ſure I coloured; for indeed I was frightened at the thoughts of dancing before ſo many people, all ſtrangers, and, which was worſe, *with* a ſtranger; however, that was unavoidable, for though I looked round the room ſeveral times, I could not ſee one perſon that I knew. And ſo, he took my hand, and led me to join in the dance.

The minuets were over before we arrived, for we were kept late by the milliner's making us wait for our things.

He ſeemed very deſirous of entering into converſation with me; but I was ſeized with ſuch a panic, that I could hardly ſpeak a word, and nothing but the ſhame of ſo ſoon changing my mind, prevented my returning to my ſeat, and declining to dance at all.

He appeared to be ſurpriſed at my terror, which I believe was but too apparent: however, he aſked no queſtions, though I fear he muſt think it very ſtrange; for I did not chooſe to tell him it was owing to my never before dancing but with a ſchool-girl.

His converſation was ſenſible and ſpirited; his air and addreſs were open and noble; his manners gentle, attentive, and infinitely engaging; his perſon is all elegance,

gance, and his countenance, the most animated and expressive I have ever seen.

In a short time we were joined by Miss Mirvan, who stood next couple to us. But how was I startled, when she whispered me that my partner was a nobleman! This gave me a new alarm; how will he be provoked, thought I, when he finds what a simple rustic he has honoured with his choice! one whose ignorance of the world makes her perpetually fear doing something wrong!

That he should be so much my superior every way, quite disconcerted me; and you will suppose my spirits were not much raised, when I heard a lady, in passing us, say, "This is the most difficult dance I ever saw."

"O dear, then," cried Maria to her partner, "with your leave, I'll sit down till the next."

"So will I too, then," cried I, "for I am sure I can hardly stand."

"But you must speak to your partner first," answered she; for he had turned aside to talk with some gentlemen. However, I had not sufficient courage to address him, and so away we all three tript, and seated ourselves at another end of the room.

But, unfortunately for me, Miss Mirvan soon after suffered herself to be prevailed upon

upon to attempt the dance; and juſt as ſhe roſe to go, ſhe cried, "My dear, yonder is your partner, Lord Orville, walking about the room in ſearch of you."

"Don't leave me then, dear girl!" cried I; but ſhe was obliged to go. And now I was more uneaſy than ever; I would have given the world to have ſeen Mrs. Mirvan, and begged of her to make my apologies; for what, thought I, can I poſſibly ſay to him in excuſe for running away? he muſt either conclude me a fool, or half mad; for any one brought up in the great world, and accuſtomed to its ways, can have no idea of ſuch ſort of fears as mine.

My confuſion encreaſed when I obſerved that he was every where ſeeking me, with apparent perplexity and ſurpriſe; but when, at laſt, I ſaw him move towards the place where I ſat, I was ready to ſink with ſhame and diſtreſs. I found it abſolutely impoſſible to keep my ſeat, becauſe I could not think of a word to ſay for myſelf, and ſo I roſe, and walked haſtily towards the card-room, reſolving to ſtay with Mrs. Mirvan the reſt of the evening, and not to dance at all. But before I could find her, Lord Orville ſaw and approached me.

He begged to know if I was not well? You may eaſily imagine how much I was embarraſſed. I made no anſwer, but hung my head, like a fool, and looked on my fan.

He

He then, with an air the most respectfully serious, asked if he had been so unhappy as to offend me?

"No, indeed!" cried I: and, in hopes of changing the discourse, and preventing his further inquiries, I desired to know if he had seen the young lady who had been conversing with me?

No;—but would I honour him with any commands to her?

"O by no means!"

Was there any other person with whom I wished to speak?

I said *no*, before I knew I had answered at all.

Should he have the pleasure of bringing me any refreshment?

I bowed, almost involuntarily. And away he flew.

I was quite ashamed of being so troublesome, and so much *above* myself as these seeming airs made me appear; but indeed I was too much confused to think or act with any consistency.

If he had not been swift as lightning, I don't know whether I should not have stolen away again; but he returned in a moment. When I had drank a glass of lemonade, he hoped, he said, that I would again honour him with my hand, as a new dance was just begun. I had not the presence

of mind to ſay a ſingle word, and ſo I let him once more lead me to the place I had left.

Shocked to find how ſilly, how childiſh a part I had acted, my former fears of dancing before ſuch a company, and with ſuch a partner, returned more forcibly than ever. I ſuppoſe he perceived my uneaſineſs, for he intreated me to ſit down again, if dancing was diſagreeable to me. But I was quite ſatisfied with the folly I had already ſhewn, and therefore declined his offer, tho' I was really ſcarce able to ſtand.

Under ſuch conſcious diſadvantages, you may eaſily imagine, my dear Sir, how ill I acquitted myſelf. But, though I both expected and deſerved to find him very much mortified and diſpleaſed at his ill fortune in the choice he had made, yet, to my very great relief, he appeared to be even contented, and very much aſſiſted and encouraged me. Theſe people in high life have too much preſence of mind, I believe, to *ſeem* diſconcerted, or out of humour, however they may feel: for had I been the perſon of the moſt conſequence in the room, I could not have met with more attention and reſpect.

When the dance was over, ſeeing me ſtill very much flurried, he led me to a ſeat, ſaying

saying that he would not suffer me to fatigue myself from politeness.

And then, if my capacity, or even if my spirits had been better, in how animated a conversation might I have been engaged! It was then I saw that the rank of Lord Orville was his least recommendation, his understanding and his manners being far more distinguished. His remarks upon the company in general were so apt, so just, so lively, I am almost surprised myself that they did not re-animate me; but indeed I was too well convinced of the ridiculous part I had myself played before so nice an observer, to be able to enjoy his pleasantry: so self-compassion gave me feeling for others. Yet I had not the courage to attempt either to defend them, or to rally in my turn, but listened to him in silent embarrassment.

When he found this, he changed the subject, and talked of public places, and public performers; but he soon discovered that I was totally ignorant of them.

He then, very ingeniously, turned the discourse to the amusements and occupations of the country.

It now struck me, that he was resolved to try whether or not I was capable of talking upon *any* subject. This put so great a constraint upon my thoughts, that I was unable to go further than a monosyllable,

and

and not even so far, when I could possibly avoid it.

We were sitting in this manner, he conversing with all gaiety, I looking down with all foolishness, when that fop who had first asked me to dance, with a most ridiculous solemnity, approached, and after a profound bow or two, said, "I humbly beg pardon, Madam,—and of you too, my Lord,—for breaking in upon such agreeable conversation—which must, doubtless, be much more delectable—than what I have the honour to offer—but—"

I interrupted him—I blush for my folly, —with laughing; yet I could not help it, for, added to the man's stately foppishness, (and he actually took snuff between every three words) when I looked round at Lord Orville, I saw such extreme surprise in his face,—the cause of which appeared so absurd, that I could not for my life preserve my gravity.

I had not laughed before from the time I had left Miss Mirvan, and I had much better have cried then; Lord Orville actually stared at me; the beau, I know not his name, looked quite enraged. "Refrain —Madam," (said he, with an important air,) "a few moments refrain!—I have but a sentence to trouble you with.—May I know

to

to what accident I must attribute not having the honour of your hand?"

"Accident, Sir!" repeated I, much astonished.

"Yes, accident, Madam—for surely,—I must take the liberty to observe—pardon me Madam,—it ought to be no common one—that should tempt a lady—so young a one too,—to be guilty of ill manners."

A confused idea now for the first time entered my head, of something I had heard of the rules of an assembly; but I was never at one before,—I have only danced at school,—and so giddy and heedless I was, that I had not once considered the impropriety of refusing one partner, and afterwards accepting another. I was thunderstruck at the recollection: but, while these thoughts were rushing into my head, Lord Orville, with some warmth, said, "This lady, Sir, is incapable of meriting such an accusation!"

The creature—for I am very angry with him—made a low bow, and with a grin the most malicious I ever saw, "My Lord," said he, "far be it from me to *accuse* the lady, for having the discernment to distinguish and prefer—the superior attractions of your Lordship."

Again he bowed, and walked off.

Was ever any thing so provoking? I was ready

ready to die with ſhame. "What a coxcomb!" exclaimed Lord Orville; while I, without knowing what I did, roſe haſtily, and moving off, "I can't imagine," cried I, "where Mrs. Mirvan has hid herſelf!"

"Give me leave to ſee," anſwered he. I bowed and ſat down again, not daring to meet his eyes; for what muſt he think of me, between my blunder, and the ſuppoſed preference?

He returned in a moment, and told me that Mrs. Mirvan was at cards, but would be glad to ſee me; and I went immediately. There was but one chair vacant, ſo, to my great relief, Lord Orville preſently left us. I then told Mrs. Mirvan my diſaſters, and ſhe good-naturedly blamed herſelf for not having better inſtructed me, but ſaid ſhe had taken it for granted that I muſt know ſuch common cuſtoms. However, the man may, I think, be ſatisfied with his pretty ſpeech, and carry his reſentment no farther.

In a ſhort time, Lord Orville returned. I conſented, with the beſt grace I could, to go down another dance, for I had had time to recollect myſelf, and therefore reſolved to uſe ſome exertion, and, if poſſible, appear leſs a fool than I had hitherto done; for it occurred to me that, inſignificant as I was, compared to a man of his rank and figure, yet, ſince he had been ſo unfortunate as to make

make choice of me for a partner, why I ſhould endeavour to make the beſt of it.

The dance, however, was ſhort, and he ſpoke very little; ſo I had no opportunity of putting my reſolution in practice. He was ſatisfied, I ſuppoſe, with his former ſucceſsleſs efforts to draw me out: or, rather, I fancied, he had been inquiring *who I was.* This again diſconcerted me, and the ſpirits I had determined to exert, again failed me. Tired, aſhamed, and mortified, I begged to ſit down till we returned home, which I did ſoon after. Lord Orville did me the honour to hand me to the coach, talking all the way of the honour *I* had done *him!* O theſe faſhionable people!

Well, my dear Sir, was it not a ſtrange evening? I could not help being thus particular, becauſe, to me, every thing is ſo new. But it is now time to conclude. I am, with all love and duty,

Your

EVELINA.

LETTER

LETTER XII.

Evelina in continuation.

Tuesday, April 5.

THERE is to be no end to the troubles of last night. I have this moment, between perſuaſion and laughter, gathered from Maria the moſt curious dialogue that ever I heard. You will, at firſt, be ſtartled at my vanity; but, my dear Sir, have patience!

It muſt have paſſed while I was ſitting with Mrs. Mirvan in the card-room. Maria was taking ſome refreſhment, and ſaw Lord Orville advancing for the ſame purpoſe himſelf; but he did not know her, though ſhe immediately recollected him. Preſently after, a very gay-looking man, ſtepping haſtily up to him, cried, "Why, my Lord, what have you done with your lovely partner?"

"*Nothing!*" anſwered Lord Orville, with a ſmile and a ſhrug.

"By Jove," cried the man, "ſhe is the moſt beautiful creature I ever ſaw in my life!"

Lord Orville, as he well might, laughed, but anſwered, "Yes, a pretty modeſt-looking girl."

"O my

"O my Lord!" cried the madman, "she is an angel!"

"A *silent* one," returned he.

"Why ay, my Lord, how stands she as to that? She looks all intelligence and expression."

"A poor weak girl!" answered Lord Orville, shaking his head.

"By Jove," cried the other, "I am glad to hear it!"

At that moment, the same odious creature who had been my former tormentor, joined them. Addressing Lord Orville with great respect, he said, "I beg pardon, my Lord,—if I was—as I fear might be the case—rather too severe in my censure of the lady who is honoured with your protection—but, my Lord, ill-breeding is apt to provoke a man."

"Ill-breeding!" cried my unknown champion, "impossible! that elegant face can never be so vile a mask!"

"O Sir, as to that," answered he, "you must allow *me* to judge; for though I pay all deference to your opinion—in other things,—yet I hope you will grant—and I appeal to your Lordship also—that I am not totally despicable as a judge of good or ill manners."

"I was so wholly ignorant," said Lord Orville gravely, "of the provocation you might

might have had, that I could not but be surprized at your singular resentment."

"It was far from my intention," answered he, "to offend your Lordship; but really, for a person who is nobody, to give herself such airs,—I own I could not command my passions. For, my Lord, though I have made diligent enquiry—I cannot learn who she is."

"By what I can make out," cried my defender, "she must be a country parson's daughter."

"He! he! he! very good, 'pon honour!" cried the fop,—"well, so I could have sworn by her manners."

And then, delighted at his own wit, he laughed, and went away, as I suppose, to repeat it.

"But what the deuce is all this?" demanded the other.

"Why a very foolish affair," answered Lord Orville; "your Helen first refused this coxcomb, and then—danced with me. This is all I can gather of it."

"O Orville," returned he, "you are a happy man!—But, *ill bred?*—I can never believe it! And she looks too sensible to be *ignorant*."

"Whether ignorant or mischievous, I will not pretend to determine, but certain it is, she attended to all *I* could say to her, though

though I have really fatigued myself with fruitless endeavours to entertain her, with the most immoveable gravity; but no sooner did Lovel begin his complaint, than she was seized with a fit of laughing, first affronting the poor beau, and then enjoying his mortification."

"Ha! ha! ha! why there's some *genius* in that, my Lord, though perhaps rather—*rustic*."

Here Maria was called to dance, and so heard no more.

Now, tell me, my dear Sir, did you ever know any thing more provoking? "*A poor weak girl!*" "*ignorant or mischievous!*" What mortifying words! I am resolved, however, that I will never again be tempted to go to an assembly. I wish I had been in Dorsetshire.

Well, after this, you will not be surprised that Lord Orville contented himself with an enquiry after our healths this morning, by his servant, without troubling himself to call; as Miss Mirvan had told me he would: but perhaps it may be only a country custom.

I would not live here for the world. I care not how soon we leave town. London soon grows tiresome. I wish the Captain would come. Mrs. Mirvan talks of

the opera for this evening; however, I am very indifferent about it.

Wednesday Morning.

Well, my dear Sir, I have been pleased against my will, I could almost say, for I must own I went out in very ill-humour, which I think you cannot wonder at: but the music and the singing were charming; they soothed me into a pleasure the most grateful, the best suited to my present disposition in the world. I hope to persuade Mrs. Mirvan to go again on Saturday. I wish the opera was every night. It is, of all entertainments, the sweetest, and most delightful. Some of the songs seemed to melt my very soul. It was what they call a *serious* opera, as the *comic* first singer was ill.

To-night we go to Ranelagh. If any of those three gentlemen who conversed so freely about me should be there——but I won't think of it.

Thursday Morning.

Well, my dear Sir, we went to Ranelagh. It is a charming place, and the brilliancy of the lights, on my first entrance, made me almost think I was in some inchanted castle, or fairy palace, for all looked like magic to me.

The very first person I saw was Lord Orville.

Orville. I felt so confused!—but he did not see me. After tea, Mrs. Mirvan being tired, Maria and I walked round the room alone. Then again we saw him, standing by the orchestra. We, too, stopt to hear a singer. He bowed to me; I courtesied, and I am sure I coloured. We soon walked on, not liking our situation: however, he did not follow us; and when we passed by the orchestra again, he was gone. Afterwards, in the course of the evening, we met him several times; but he was always with some party, and never spoke to us, tho' whenever he chanced to meet my eyes, he condescended to bow.

I cannot but be hurt at the opinion he entertains of me. It is true, my own behaviour incurred it—yet he is himself the most agreeable, and, seemingly, the most amiable man in the world, and therefore it is, that I am grieved to be thought ill of by him: for of whose esteem ought we to be ambitious, if not of those who most merit our own?—But it is too late to reflect upon this now. Well, I can't help it;—However, I think I have done with assemblies!

This morning was destined for *seeing sights*, auctions, curious shops, and so forth; but my head ached, and I was not in a humour to be amused, and so I made them

go without me, though very unwillingly. They are all kindneſs.

And now I am ſorry I did not accompany them, for I know not what to do with myſelf. I had reſolved not to go to the play to-night; but I believe I ſhall. In ſhort, I hardly care whether I do or not.

* * * * *

I thought I had done wrong! Mrs. Mirvan and Maria have been half the town over, and ſo entertained!—while I, like a fool, ſtayed at home to do nothing. And, at an auction in Pall-mall, who ſhould they meet but Lord Orville! He ſat next to Mrs. Mirvan, and they talked a great deal together: but ſhe gave me no account of the converſation.

I may never have ſuch another opportunity of ſeeing London; I am quite ſorry that I was not of the party; but I deſerve this mortification, for having indulged my ill-humour.

Thurſday Night.

We are juſt returned from the play, which was King Lear, and has made me very ſad. We did not ſee any body we knew.

Well, adieu, it is too late to write more.

Friday.

Friday.

Captain Mirvan is arrived. I have not ſpirits to give an account of his introduction, for he has really ſhocked me. I do not like him. He ſeems to be ſurly, vulgar, and diſagreeable.

Almoſt the ſame moment that Maria was preſented to him, he began ſome rude jeſts upon the bad ſhape of her noſe, and called her a tall, ill-formed thing. She bore it with the utmoſt good humour; but that kind and ſweet-tempered woman, Mrs. Mirvan, deſerved a better lot. I am amazed ſhe would marry him.

For my own part, I have been ſo ſhy, that I have hardly ſpoken to him, or he to me. I cannot imagine why the family was ſo rejoiced at his return. If he had ſpent his whole life abroad, I ſhould have ſuppoſed they might rather have been thankful than ſorrowful. However, I hope they do not think ſo ill of him as I do. At leaſt, I am ſure they have too much prudence to make it known.

Saturday Night.

We have been to the opera, and I am ſtill more pleaſed than I was on Tueſday. I could have thought myſelf in paradiſe, but for the continual talking of the company around me. We ſat in the pit, where

every body was dreſſed in ſo high a ſtyle, that, if I had been leſs delighted with the performance, my eyes would have found me ſufficient entertainment from looking at the ladies.

I was very glad I did not ſit next the Captain, for he could not bear the muſic, or ſingers, and was extremely groſs in his obſervations on both. When the opera was over, we went into a place called the coffee-room, where ladies as well as gentlemen aſſemble. There are all ſorts of refreſh-ments, and the company walk about, and *chat* with the ſame eaſe and freedom as in a private room.

On Monday we go to a ridotto, and on Wedneſday we return to Howard Grove. The Captain ſays he won't ſtay here to be *ſmoked with filth* any longer; but, having been ſeven years *ſmoked with a burning ſun*, he will retire to the country, and ſink into a *fair-weather chap*.

Adieu, my dear Sir.

LETTER

LETTER XIII.

Evelina in continuation.

Tuesday, April 12.

My dear Sir,

WE came home from the ridotto so late, or rather, so early, that it was not possible for me to write. Indeed we did not *go*, you will be frightened to hear it,—till past eleven o'clock: but nobody does. A terrible reverse of the order of nature! We sleep with the sun, and wake with the moon.

The room was very magnificent, the lights and decorations were brilliant, and the company gay and splendid. But I should have told you, that I made many objections to being of the party, according to the resolution I had formed. However, Maria laughed me out of my scruples, and so once again—I went to an assembly.

Miss Mirvan danced a minuet, but I had not the courage to follow her example. In our walks I saw Lord Orville. He was quite alone, but did not observe us. Yet, as he seemed of no party, I thought it was not impossible that he might join us; and tho' I did not wish much to dance at all—yet, as I was more acquainted with him than with any

other person in the room, I must own I could not help thinking it would be infinitely more desirable to dance again with him, than with an entire stranger. To be sure, after all that had passed, it was very ridiculous to suppose it even probable, that Lord Orville would again honour me with his choice; yet I am compelled to confess my absurdity, by way of explaining what follows.

Miss Mirvan was soon engaged; and, presently after, a very fashionable, gay-looking man, who seemed about 30 years of age, addressed himself to me, and begged to have the honour of dancing with me. Now Maria's partner was a gentleman of Mrs. Mirvan's acquaintance; for she had told us it was highly improper for young women to dance with strangers, at any public assembly. Indeed it was by no means my wish so to do; yet I did not like to confine myself from dancing at all; neither did I dare refuse this gentleman, as I had done Mr. Lovel, and then, if any acquaintance should offer, accept him: and so, all these reasons combining, induced me to tell him—yet I blush to write it to you! —that I was *already engaged*; by which I meant to keep myself at liberty to dance or not, as matters should fall out.

I suppose my consciousness betrayed my artifice, for he looked at me as if incredulous;

lous; and, instead of being satisfied with my answer, and leaving me, according to my expectation, he walked at my side, and, with the greatest ease imaginable, began a conversation, in the free style which only belongs to old and intimate acquaintance. But, what was most provoking, he asked me a thousand questions concerning *the partner to whom I was engaged.* And, at last, he said, "Is it really possible that a man whom you have honoured with your acceptance, can fail to be at hand to profit from your goodness?"

I felt extremely foolish, and begged Mrs. Mirvan to lead to a seat, which she very obligingly did. The Captain sat next her, and, to my great surprise, this gentleman thought proper to follow, and seat himself next to me.

"What an insensible!" continued he, "why, Madam, you are missing the most delightful dance in the world! The man must be either mad, or a fool—Which do you incline to think him yourself?"

"Neither, Sir," answered I in some confusion.

He begged my pardon for the freedom of his supposition, saying, "I really was off my guard, from astonishment that any man can be so much and so unaccountably his own enemy. But where, Madam, can

he poſſibly be?—has he left the room?—or has not he been in it?"

"Indeed, Sir," ſaid I peeviſhly, "I know nothing of him."

"I don't wonder that you are diſconcerted, Madam, it is really very provoking. The beſt part of the evening will be abſolutely loſt. He deſerves not that you ſhould wait for him."

"I do not, Sir," ſaid I, "and I beg you not to——"

"Mortifying, indeed, Madam," interrupted he, "a lady to wait for a gentleman:—O fie!—careleſs fellow!—what can detain him?—Will you give me leave to ſeek him?"

"If you pleaſe, Sir," anſwered I, quite terrified leſt Mrs. Mirvan ſhould attend to him, for ſhe looked very much ſurpriſed at ſeeing me enter into converſation with a ſtranger.

"With all my heart," cried he; "pray what coat has he on?"

"Indeed I never looked at it."

"Out upon him!" cried he; "What! did he addreſs you in a coat not worth looking at?—What a ſhabby wretch!"

How ridiculous! I really could not help laughing, which, I fear, encouraged him, for he went on.

"Charming creature!—and can you really bear ill uſage with ſo much ſweetneſs?—Can

—Can you, *like patience on a monument*, ſmile in the midſt of diſappointment?—For my part, though I am not the offended perſon, my indignation is ſo great, that I long to kick the fellow round the room!—unleſs, indeed,—(heſitating and looking earneſtly at me,) unleſs, indeed—it is a partner of your own *creating?*"

I was dreadfully abaſhed, and could not make any anſwer.

"But no!" cried he, (again, and with warmth,) "it cannot be that you are ſo cruel! Softneſs itſelf is painted in your eyes:—You could not, ſurely, have the barbarity ſo wantonly to trifle with my miſery."

I turned away from this nonſenſe, with real diſguſt. Mrs. Mirvan ſaw my confuſion, but was perplexed what to think of it, and I could not explain to her the cauſe, leſt the Captain ſhould hear me. I therefore propoſed to walk, ſhe conſented, and we all roſe; but, would you believe it? this man had the aſſurance to riſe too, and walk cloſe by my ſide, as if of my party!

"Now," cried he, "I hope we ſhall ſee this ingrate.—Is that he?"—pointing to an old man, who was lame, "or that?" And in this manner he aſked me of whoever was old or ugly in the room. I made no ſort of anſwer; and when he found that I was reſolutely ſilent, and walked on, as much

as I could, without obſerving him, he ſuddenly ſtamped his foot, and cried out, in a paſſion, "Fool! ideot! booby!"

I turned haſtily toward him: "O Madam," continued he, "forgive my vehemence, but I am diſtracted to think there ſhould exiſt a wretch who can ſlight a bleſſing for which I would forfeit my life!—O! that I could but meet him! I would ſoon——But I grow angry: pardon me, Madam, my paſſions are violent, and your injuries affect me!"

I began to apprehend he was a madman, and ſtared at him with the utmoſt aſtoniſhment. "I ſee you are moved, Madam," ſaid he, "generous creature!—but don't be alarmed, I am cool again, I am indeed,—upon my ſoul I am,—I entreat you, moſt lovely of mortals! I entreat you to be eaſy."

"Indeed, Sir," ſaid I very ſeriouſly, "I muſt inſiſt upon your leaving me; you are quite a ſtranger to me, and I am both unuſed, and averſe to your language and your manners."

This ſeemed to have ſome effect on him. He made me a low bow, begged my pardon, and vowed he would not for the world offend me.

"Then, Sir, you muſt leave me," cried I.

"I am gone, Madam, I am gone!" with a moſt tragical air; and he marched away,

away, a quick pace, out of sight in a moment; but before I had time to congratulate myself, he was again at my elbow.

"And could you really let me go, and not be sorry?—Can you see me suffer torments inexpressible, and yet retain all your favour for that miscreant who flies you?—Ungrateful puppy!—I could bastinado him!"

"For Heaven's sake, my dear," cried Mrs. Mirvan, "who is he talking of?"

"Indeed—I do not know, Madam," said I, "but I wish he would leave me."

"What's all that there?" cried the Captain.

The man made a low bow, and said, "Only, Sir, a slight objection which this young lady makes to dancing with me, and which I am endeavouring to obviate. I shall think myself greatly honoured, if you will intercede for me."

"That lady, Sir," said the Captain coldly, "is her own mistress." And he walked sullenly on.

"You, Madam," said the man, (who looked delighted, to Mrs. Mirvan,) "you, I hope, will have the goodness to speak for me."

"Sir," answered she gravely, "I have not the pleasure of being acquainted with you."

"I hope when you have, Ma'am," cried

he, (undaunted) "you will honour me with your approbation; but, while I am yet unknown to you, it would be truely generous in you to countenance me; and, I flatter myself, Madam, that you will not have cause to repent it."

Mrs. Mirvan, with an embarrassed air, replied, "I do not at all mean, Sir, to doubt your being a gentleman,—but,—"

"But *what*, Madam?—that doubt removed, why a *but?*"

"Well, Sir," said Mrs. Mirvan, (with a good-humoured smile,) "I will even treat you with your own plainness, and try what effect that will have on you: I must therefore tell you, once for all,——"

"O pardon me, Madam!" interrupted he eagerly, "you must not proceed with those words, *once for all*; no, if *I* have been too *plain*, and though a *man*, deserve a rebuke, remember, dear ladies, that if you *copy*, you ought, in justice, to *excuse* me."

We both stared at the man's strange behaviour.

"Be nobler than your sex," continued he, turning to me, "honour me with one dance, and give up the ingrate who has merited so ill your patience."

Mrs. Mirvan looked with astonishment at us both. "Who does he speak of, my dear?—you never mentioned——"

"O Madam!" exclaimed he, "he was not worth mentioning—it is pity he was ever thought of; but let us forget his exiſtence. One dance is all I ſolicit; permit me, Madam, the honour of this young lady's hand; it will be a favour I ſhall ever moſt gratefully acknowledge."

"Sir," anſwered ſhe, "favours and ſtrangers have with me no connection."

"If you have hitherto," ſaid he, "confined your benevolence to your intimate friends, ſuffer me to be the firſt for whom your charity is enlarged."

"Well, Sir, I know not what to ſay to you,—but—"

He ſtopt her *but* with ſo many urgent entreaties, that ſhe at laſt told me, I muſt either go down one dance, or avoid his importunities by returning home. I heſitated which alternative to chuſe; but this impetuous man at length prevailed, and I was obliged to conſent to dance with him.

And thus was my deviation from truth puniſhed; and thus did this man's determined boldneſs conquer.

During the dance, before we were too much engaged in it for converſation, he was extremely provoking about *my partner*, and tried every means in his power to make me own that I had deceived him; which, though I would not ſo far humble myſelf as to acknowledge, was, indeed, but too obvious.

Lord

Lord Orville, I fancy, did not dance at all; he ſeemed to have a large acquaintance, and joined ſeveral different parties: but you will eaſily ſuppoſe I was not much pleaſed to ſee him, in a few minutes after I was gone, walk towards the place I had juſt left, and bow to, and join Mrs. Mirvan!

How unlucky I thought myſelf, that I had not longer withſtood this ſtranger's importunities! The moment we had gone down the dance, I was haſtening away from him, but he ſtopt me, and ſaid that I could by no means return to my party, without giving offence, before we had *done our duty of walking up the dance.* As I know nothing at all of theſe rules and cuſtoms, I was obliged to ſubmit to his directions; but I fancy I looked rather uneaſy, for he took notice of my inattention, ſaying, in his free way, "Whence that anxiety?—Why are thoſe lovely eyes perpetually averted?"

"I wiſh you would ſay no more to me, Sir," (cried I peeviſhly) "you have already deſtroyed all my happineſs for this evening."

"Good Heaven! what is it I have done?—How have I merited this ſcorn?"

"You have tormented me to death; you have forced me from my friends, and intruded yourſelf upon me, againſt my will, for a partner."

"Surely,

"Surely, my dear Madam, we ought to be better friends, since there seems to be something of sympathy in the frankness of our dispositions.—And yet, were you not an angel—how do you think I could brook such contempt?"

"If I have offended you," cried I, "you have but to leave me—and O how I wish you would!"

"My dear creature," (said he, half laughing) "why where could you be educated?"

"Where I most sincerely wish I now was!"

"How conscious you must be, all beautiful that you are, that those charming airs serve only to heighten the bloom of your complexion!"

"Your freedom, Sir, where you are more acquainted, may perhaps be less disagreeable; but to *me*——"

"You do me justice," (cried he, interrupting me) "yes, I do indeed improve upon acquaintance; you will hereafter be quite charmed with me."

"Hereafter, Sir, I hope I shall never—"

"O hush!—hush!—have you forgot the situation in which I found you?—Have you forgot, that when deserted, I pursued you,—when betrayed, I adored you?—but for me——"

"But

"But for you, Sir, I might, perhaps, have been happy."

"What then, am I to conclude that, *but for me*, your *partner* would have appeared?—poor fellow!—and did my presence awe him?"

"I wish *his* presence, Sir, could awe *you!*"

"His presence!—perhaps then you see him?"

"Perhaps, Sir, I do;" cried I, quite wearied of his raillery.

"Where?—where?—for Heaven's sake shew me the wretch!"

"Wretch, Sir?"

"O, a very savage!—a sneaking, shame-faced, despicable puppy!"

I know not what bewitched me—but my pride was hurt, and my spirits were tired, and—in short—I had the folly, looking at Lord Orville, to repeat, "*Despicable*, you think?"

His eyes instantly followed mine; "Why is *that* the gentleman?"

I made no answer; I could not affirm, and I would not deny;—for I hoped to be relieved from his teizing, by his mistake.

The very moment we had done what he called our duty, I eagerly desired to return to Mrs. Mirvan.

"To

"To your *partner*, I presume, Madam?" said he, very gravely.

This quite confounded me; I dreaded lest this mischievous man, ignorant of his rank, should address himself to Lord Orville, and say something which might expose my artifice. Fool! to involve myself in such difficulties! I now feared what I had before wished, and, therefore, to *avoid* Lord Orville, I was obliged myself to *propose* going down another dance, though I was ready to sink with shame while I spoke.

"But your *partner*, Ma'am?" (said he, affecting a very solemn air) "perhaps he may resent my detaining you: if you will give me leave to ask his consent—"

"Not for the universe."

"Who is he, Madam?"

I wished myself a hundred miles off. He repeated his question, "What is his name?"

"Nothing—nobody—I don't know.—"

He assumed a most important solemnity; "How!—not know?—Give me leave, my dear Madam, to recommend this caution to you; Never dance in public with a stranger,—with one whose name you are unacquainted with,—who may be a mere adventurer,—a man of no character,—consider to what impertinence you may expose yourself."

Was

Was ever any thing so ridiculous? I could not help laughing, in spite of my vexation.

At this instant, Mrs. Mirvan, followed by Lord Orville, walked up to us. You will easily believe it was not difficult for me to recover my gravity; but what was my consternation, when this strange man, destined to be the scourge of my artifice, exclaimed, "Ha! my Lord Orville!—I protest I did not know your Lordship. What can I say for my usurpation?—Yet, faith, my Lord, such a prize was not to be neglected."

My shame and confusion were unspeakable. Who could have supposed or foreseen that this man knew Lord Orville! But falsehood is not more unjustifiable than unsafe.

Lord Orville—well he might,—looked all amazement.

"The philosophic coldness of your Lordship," continued this odious creature, "every man is not endowed with. I have used my utmost endeavours to entertain this lady, though I fear without success; and your Lordship will not be a little flattered, if acquainted with the difficulty which attended my procuring the honour of only one dance." Then, turning to me, who was sinking with shame, while Lord Orville

ville ſtood motionleſs, and Mrs. Mirvan aſtoniſhed,—he ſuddenly ſeized my hand, ſaying, "Think, my Lord, what muſt be my reluctance to reſign this fair hand to your Lordſhip!"

In the ſame inſtant, Lord Orville took it of him; I coloured violently, and made an effort to recover it. "You do me too much honour, Sir," cried he, (with an air of gallantry, preſſing it to his lips before he let it go) "however, I ſhall be happy to profit by it, if this lady," (turning to Mrs. Mirvan) "will permit me to ſeek for her party."

To compel him thus to dance, I could not endure, and eagerly called out, "By no means—not for the world!—I muſt beg——"

"Will you honour *me*, Madam, with your commands," cried my tormentor; "may *I* ſeek the lady's party?"

"No, Sir," anſwered I, turning from him.

"What *ſhall* be done, my dear?" ſaid Mrs. Mirvan.

"Nothing, Ma'am;—any thing, I mean——"

"But do you dance, or not? you ſee his Lordſhip waits."

"I hope not,—I beg that—I would not for the world—I am ſure I ought to—to—"

I could not ſpeak; but that confident man,

man, determined to discover whether or not I had deceived him, said to Lord Orville, who stood suspended, "My Lord, this affair, which, at present, seems perplexed, I will briefly explain;—this lady proposed to me another dance,—nothing could have made me more happy—I only wished for your Lordship's permission, which, if now granted, will, I am persuaded, set every thing right."

I glowed with indignation. "No, Sir—It is your absence, and that alone, can set every thing right."

"For Heaven's sake, my dear," (cried Mrs. Mirvan, who could no longer contain her surprize,) "what does all this mean?—were you pre-engaged?—had Lord Orville——"

"No, Madam, cried I,—only—only I did not know that gentleman,—and so,—and so I thought—I intended—I—"

Overpowered by all that had passed, I had not strength to make my mortifying explanation;—my spirits quite failed me, and I burst into tears.

They all seemed shocked and amazed.

"What is the matter, my dearest love?" cried Mrs. Mirvan, with the kindest concern.

"What have I done!" exclaimed my evil genius, and ran officiously for a glass of water.

However,

However, a hint was sufficient for Lord Orville, who comprehended all I would have explained. He immediately led me to a seat, and said, in a low voice, "Be not distressed, I beseech you; I shall ever think my name honoured by your making use of it."

This politeness relieved me. A general murmur had alarmed Miss Mirvan, who flew instantly to me; while Lord Orville, the moment Mrs. Mirvan had taken the water, led my tormentor away.

"For Heaven's sake, dear Madam," cried I, "let me go home,—indeed, I cannot stay here any longer."

"Let us all go," cried my kind Maria.

"But the Captain—what will he say—I had better go home in a chair."

Mrs. Mirvan consented, and I rose to depart. Lord Orville and that man both came to me. The first, with an attention I had but ill merited from him, led me to a chair, while the other followed, pestering me with apologies. I wished to have made mine to Lord Orville, but was too much ashamed.

It was about one o'clock. Mrs. Mirvan's servants saw me home.

And now,—what again shall ever tempt me to an assembly? I dread to hear what you will think of me, my most dear and honoured Sir: you will need your utmost

partiality,

partiality, to receive me without displeasure.

This morning Lord Orville has sent to enquire after our healths: and Sir Clement Willoughby, for that, I find, is the name of my persecutor, has called: but I would not go down stairs till he was gone.

And now, my dear Sir, I can somewhat account for the strange, provoking, and ridiculous conduct of this Sir Clement last night; for Miss Mirvan says, he is the very man with whom she heard Lord Orville conversing at Mrs. Stanley's, when I was spoken of in so mortifying a manner. He was pleased to say he was glad to hear I was a fool, and therefore, I suppose, he concluded he might talk as much nonsense as he pleased to me: however, I am very indifferent as to his opinion;—but for Lord Orville,—if then he thought me an idiot, now, I am sure, he must suppose me both bold and presuming. Make use of his name!—what impertinence!—he can never know how it happened,—he can only imagine it was from an excess of vanity:—well, however, I shall leave this bad city to-morrow, and never again will I enter it!

The Captain intends to take us to-night to the Fantocini. I cannot bear that Captain; I can give you no idea how gross he is.

is. I heartily rejoice that he was not present at the disagreeable conclusion of yesterday's adventure, for I am sure he would have contributed to my confusion; which might perhaps have diverted him, as he seldom or never smiles but at some other person's expence.

And here I conclude my London letters, —and without any regret, for I am too inexperienced and ignorant to conduct myself with propriety in this town, where every thing is new to me, and many things are unaccountable and perplexing.

Adieu, my dear Sir; Heaven restore me safely to you! I wish I was to go immediately to Berry Hill; yet the wish is ungrateful to Mrs. Mirvan, and therefore I will repress it. I shall write an account of the Fantocini from Howard Grove. We have not been to half the public places that are now open, though I dare say you will think we have been to all. But they are almost as innumerable as the persons who fill them.

LETTER XIV.

Evelina in continuation.

Queen-Ann-Street, April 13.

HOW much will you be ſurpriſed, my deareſt Sir, at receiving another letter from London of your Evelina's writing! But, believe me, it was not my fault, neither is it my happineſs, that I am ſtill here: our journey has been poſtponed by an accident equally unexpected and diſagreeable.

We went laſt night to ſee the Fantocini, where we had infinite entertainment from the performance of a little comedy, in French and Italian, by puppets, ſo admirably managed, that they both aſtoniſhed and diverted us all, except the Captain, who has a fixed and moſt prejudiced hatred of whatever is not Engliſh.

When it was over, while we waited for the coach, a tall elderly woman bruſhed quickly paſt us, calling out, "My God! what ſhall I do?"

"Why what *would* you do?" cried the Captain.

"*Ma foi, Monſieur,*" anſwered ſhe, "I have loſt my company, and in this place I don't know nobody."

There

There was something foreign in her accent, though it was difficult to discover whether she was an English or a French woman. She was very well dressed, and seemed so entirely at a loss what to do, that Mrs. Mirvan proposed to the Captain to assist her.

"Assist her!" cried he, "ay, with all my heart; — let a link-boy call her a coach."

There was not one to be had, and it rained very fast.

"*Mon Dieu*," exclaimed the stranger, "what shall become of me? *Je suis au désespoir!*"

"Dear Sir," cried Miss Mirvan, "pray let us take the poor lady into our coach. She is quite alone, and a foreigner—."

"She's never the better for that," answered he: "she may be a woman of the town, for any thing you know."

"She does not appear such," said Mrs. Mirvan, "and indeed she seems so much distressed, that we shall but follow the golden rule, if we carry her to her lodgings."

"You are mighty fond of new acquaintance," returned he, "but first let us know if she be going our way."

Upon enquiry, we found that she lived in Oxford Road, and, after some disputing, the Captain, surlily, and with a very bad

grace, consented to admit her into his coach; though he soon convinced us, that he was determined she should not be too much obliged to him, for he seemed absolutely bent upon quarrelling with her: for which strange inhospitality, I can assign no other reason, than that she appeared to be a foreigner.

The conversation began, by her telling us, that she had been in England only two days; that the gentlemen belonging to her were Parisians, and had left her, to see for a hackney-coach, as her own carriage was abroad; and that she had waited for them till she was quite frightened, and concluded that they had lost themselves.

"And pray," said the Captain, "why did you go to a public place without an Englishman?"

"*Ma foi*, Sir," answered she, "because none of my acquaintance is in town."

"Why then," said he, "I'll tell you what; your best way is to go out of it yourself."

"*Pardi*, *Monsieur*," returned she, "and so I shall; for, I promise you, I think the English a parcel of brutes; and I'll go back to France as fast as I can, for I would not live among none of you."

"Who wants you?" cried the Captain; "do you suppose, Madam French, we have

not enough of other nations to pick our pockets already? I'll warrant you, there's no need for you for to put in your oar."

"Pick your pockets, Sir! I wish nobody wanted to pick your pockets no more than I do; and I'll promise you, you'd be safe enough. But there's no nation under the sun can beat the English for ill-politeness; for my part, I hate the very sight of them, and so I shall only just visit a person of quality or two, of my particular acquaintance, and then I shall go back again to France."

"Ay, do;" cried he, "and then go to the devil together, for that's the fittest voyage for the French and the quality."

"We'll take care, however," cried the stranger, with great vehemence, "not to admit none of your vulgar, unmannered English among us."

"O never fear," (returned he coolly) "we shan't dispute the point with you; you and the quality may have the devil all to yourselves."

Desirous of changing the subject of a conversation which now became very alarming, Miss Mirvan called out, "Lord, how slow the man drives!"

"Never mind, Moll," said her father, "I'll warrant you he'll drive fast enough to-

morrow, when you are going to Howard Grove."

"To Howard Grove!" exclaimed the ſtranger; "why, *mon Dieu*, do you know Lady Howard?"

"Why, what if we do?" anſwered he, "that's nothing to you; ſhe's none of *your* quality, I'll promiſe you."

"Who told you that," cried ſhe, "you don't know nothing about the matter; beſides, you're the ill-bredeſt perſon ever I ſee; and as to your knowing Lady Howard, I don't believe no ſuch a thing; unleſs, indeed, you are her ſteward."

The Captain, ſwearing terribly, ſaid, with great fury, "*you* would much ſooner be taken for her waſh-woman."

"Her waſh-woman, indeed!—Ha, ha, ha!—why you han't no eyes; did you ever ſee a waſh-woman in ſuch a gown as this?—beſides, I'm no ſuch mean perſon, for I'm as good as Lady Howard, and as rich too; and beſides, I'm now come to England to viſit her."

"You may ſpare yourſelf that there trouble," ſaid the Captain, "ſhe has paupers enough about her already."

"Paupers, Mr.!—no more a pauper than yourſelf, nor ſo much neither;—but you are a low, dirty fellow, and I ſhan't ſtoop to take no more notice of you."

"Dirty

"Dirty fellow!" (exclaimed the Captain, seizing both her wrists) "hark you, Mrs. Frog, you'd best hold your tongue, for I must make bold to tell you, if you don't, that I shall make no ceremony of tripping you out of the window; and there you may lie in the mud till some of your *Monseers* come to help you out of it."

Their encreasing passion quite terrified us; and Mrs. Mirvan was beginning to remonstrate with the Captain, when we were all silenced by what follows.

"Let me go, villain that you are, let me go, or I'll promise you I'll get you put to prison for this usage; I'm no common person, I assure you, and, *ma foi*, I'll go to Justice Fielding about you; for I'm a person of fashion, and I'll make you know it, or my name i'n't Duval."

I heard no more: amazed, frightened, and unspeakably shocked, an involuntary exclamation of *Gracious Heaven!* escaped me, and, more dead than alive, I sunk into Mrs. Mirvan's arms. But let me draw a veil over a scene too cruel for a heart so compassionately tender as yours; it is sufficient that you know this supposed foreigner proved to be Madame Duval,—the grandmother of your Evelina!

O, Sir, to discover so near a relation in a woman who had thus introduced herself!—

what would become of me, were it not for you, my protector, my friend, and my refuge?

My extreme concern, and Mrs. Mirvan's ſurpriſe, immediately betrayed me. But I will not ſhock you with the manner of her acknowledging me, or the bitterneſs, the *groſsneſs*—I cannot otherwiſe expreſs myſelf, —with which ſhe ſpoke of thoſe unhappy paſt tranſactions you have ſo pathetically related to me. All the miſery of a much-injured parent, dear, though never ſeen, regretted, though never known, crowded ſo forcibly upon my memory, that they rendered this interview—one only excepted—the moſt afflicting I can ever know.

When we ſtopt at her lodgings, ſhe deſired me to accompany her into the houſe, and ſaid ſhe could eaſily procure a room for me to ſleep in. Alarmed and trembling, I turned to Mrs. Mirvan. "My daughter, Madam," ſaid that ſweet woman, "cannot ſo abruptly part with her young friend; you muſt allow a little time to wean them from each other."

"Pardon me, Ma'am," anſwered Madame Duval, (who, from the time of her being known, ſomewhat ſoftened her manners) "Miſs can't poſſibly be ſo nearly connected to this child as I am."

"No matter for that," cried the Captain,

tain, (who espoused my cause to satisfy his own pique, though an awkward apology had passed between them) "she was sent to us, and so, d'ye see, we don't chuse for to part with her."

I promised to wait upon her at what time she pleased the next day, and, after a short debate, she desired me to breakfast with her, and we proceeded to Queen-Ann-street.

What an unfortunate adventure! I could not close my eyes the whole night. A thousand times I wished I had never left Berry Hill; however, my return thither shall be accelerated to the utmost of my power; and, once more in that abode of tranquil happiness, I will suffer no temptation to allure me elsewhere.

Mrs. Mirvan was so kind as to accompany me to Madame Duval's house this morning. The Captain too, offered his service, which I declined, from a fear she should suppose I meant to insult her.

She frowned most terribly upon Mrs. Mirvan, but she received me with as much tenderness as I believe she is capable of feeling. Indeed, our meeting seems really to have affected her; for when, overcome by the variety of emotions which the sight of her occasioned, I almost fainted in her arms, she burst into tears, and said, "Let me not lose my poor daughter a second

time!" This unexpected humanity softened me extremely; but she very soon excited my warmest indignation, by the ungrateful mention she made of the best of men, my dear, and most generous benefactor. However, grief and anger mutually gave way to terror, upon her avowing the intention of her visiting England was to make me return with her to France. This, she said, was a plan she had formed from the instant she had heard of my birth, which, she protested, did not reach her ears till I must have been twelve years of age; but Monsieur Duval, who, she declared, was the worst husband in the world, would not permit her to do any thing she wished: he had been dead but three months, which had been employed in arranging certain affairs, that were no sooner settled, than she set off for England. She was already out of mourning, for she said nobody here could tell how long she had been a widow.

She must have been married very early in life; what her age is, I do not know, but she really looks to be less than fifty. She dresses very gaily, paints very high, and the traces of former beauty are still very visible in her face.

I know not when, or how, this visit would have ended, had not the Captain called for Mrs. Mirvan, and absolutely in-

sisted

sisted upon my attending her. He is become, very suddenly, so warmly my friend, that I quite dread his officiousness. Mrs. Mirvan, however, whose principal study seems to be healing those wounds which her husband inflicts, appeased Madame Duval's wrath, by a very polite invitation to drink tea and spend the evening here. Not without great difficulty was the Captain prevailed upon to defer his journey some time longer; but what could be done? it would have been indecent for me to have quitted town the very instant I discovered that Madame Duval was in it; and to have stayed here solely under her protection—Mrs. Mirvan, thank Heaven, was too kind for such a thought. That she should follow us to Howard Grove, I almost equally dreaded; it is, therefore, determined that we remain in London for some days, or a week: though the Captain has declared that the *old French hag*, as he is pleased to call her, shall fare never the better for it.

My only hope, is to get safe to Berry Hill; where, counselled and sheltered by you, I shall have nothing more to fear. Adieu, my ever dear and most honoured Sir! I shall have no happiness till I am again with you!

LETTER XV.

Mr. Villars to Evelina.

Berry Hill, April 16.

IN the belief and hope that my Evelina would ere now have bid adieu to London, I had intended to have deferred writing, till I heard of her return to Howard Grove; but the letter I have this moment received, with intelligence of Madame Duval's arrival in England, demands an immediate anſwer.

Her journey hither equally grieves and alarms me: how much did I pity my child, when I read of a diſcovery at once ſo unexpected and unwiſhed! I have long dreaded this meeting and its conſequence; to claim you, ſeems naturally to follow acknowledging you: I am well acquainted with her diſpoſition, and have for many years foreſeen the conteſt which now threatens us.

Cruel as are the circumſtances of this affair, you muſt not, my love, ſuffer it to depreſs your ſpirits; remember, that while life is lent me, I will devote it to your ſervice; and, for future time, I will make ſuch proviſion as ſhall ſeem to me moſt conducive to your future happineſs. Se-

cure

cure of my protection, and relying on my tenderness, let no apprehensions of Madame Duval disturb your peace; conduct yourself towards her with all the respect and deference due to so near a relation, remembering always, that the failure of duty on her part, can by no means justify any neglect on yours: indeed, the more forcibly you are struck with improprieties and misconduct in another, the greater should be your observance and diligence to avoid even the shadow of similar errors. Be careful, therefore, that no remissness of attention, no indifference of obliging, make known to her the independence I assure you of; but when she fixes the time for her leaving England, trust to me the task of refusing your attending her: disagreeable to myself I own it will be, yet to you, it would be improper, if not impossible.

In regard to her opinion of me, I am more sorry than surprised at her determined blindness; the palliation which she feels the want of, for her own conduct, leads her to seek for failings in all who were concerned in those unhappy transactions which she has so much reason to lament. And this, as it is the cause, so we must, in some measure, consider it as the excuse of her inveteracy.

How grateful to me are your wishes to return to Berry Hill! your lengthened stay

in London, and the diſſipation in which I find you are involved, fill me with uneaſineſs: I mean not however that I would have you ſequeſter yourſelf from the party to which you belong, ſince Mrs. Mirvan might thence infer a reproof which your youth and her kindneſs would render inexcuſable. I will not, therefore, enlarge upon this ſubject, but content myſelf with telling you, that I ſhall heartily rejoice when I hear of your ſafe arrival at Howard Grove, for which place I hope you will be preparing at the time you receive this letter.

I cannot too much thank you, my beſt Evelina, for the minuteneſs of your communications; continue to me this indulgence, for I ſhould be miſerable if in ignorance of your proceedings.

How new to you is the ſcene of life in which you are now engaged,—balls—plays—operas—ridottos—Ah, my child! at your return hither, how will you bear the change? My heart trembles for your future tranquillity.—Yet I will hope every thing from the unſullied whiteneſs of your ſoul, and the native livelineſs of your diſpoſition.

I am ſure I need not ſay, how much more I was pleaſed with the miſtakes of your inexperience at the private ball, than with the attempted adoption of more faſhionable manners at the ridotto. But your confuſion

and

and mortifications were such as to entirely silence all reproofs on my part.

I hope you will see no more of Sir Clement Willoughby, whose conversation and boldness are extremely disgustful to me. I was gratified by the good-nature of Lord Orville, upon your making use of his name, but I hope you will never again put it to such a trial.

Heaven bless thee, my dear child, and grant that neither misfortune nor vice may ever rob thee of that gaiety of heart which, resulting from innocence, while it constitutes your own, contributes also to the felicity of all who know you!

ARTHUR VILLARS.

LETTER XVI.

Evelina to the Rev. Mr. Villars.

Queen-Ann-street, Thursday morning, April 14.

BEFORE our dinner was over yesterday, Madame Duval came to tea: though it will lessen your surprise, to hear that it was near five o'clock, for we never dine till the day is almost over. She was asked into another room, while the table was cleared,

cleared, and then was invited to partake of the deſert.

She was attended by a French gentleman, whom ſhe introduced by the name of Monſieur Du Bois: Mrs. Mirvan received them both with her uſual politeneſs; but the Captain looked very much diſpleaſed, and after a ſhort ſilence, very ſternly ſaid to Madame Duval, "Pray who aſked you to bring that there ſpark with you?"

"O," cried ſhe, "I never go no-where without him."

Another ſhort ſilence enſued, which was terminated by the Captain's turning roughly to the foreigner, and ſaying, "Do you know, *Monſeer*, that you're the firſt Frenchman I ever let come into my houſe?"

Monſieur Du Bois made a profound bow. He ſpeaks no Engliſh, and underſtands it ſo imperfectly, that he might, poſſibly, imagine he had received a compliment.

Mrs. Mirvan endeavoured to divert the Captain's ill-humour, by ſtarting new ſubjects; but he left to her all the trouble of ſupporting them, and leant back in his chair in gloomy ſilence, except when any opportunity offered of uttering ſome ſarcaſm upon the French. Finding her efforts to render the evening agreeable were fruitleſs, Mrs. Mirvan propoſed a party to Ranelagh. Madame Duval joyfully conſented

to

to it, and the Captain, though he railed againſt the diſſipation of the women, did not oppoſe it, and therefore Maria and I ran up ſtairs to dreſs ourſelves.

Before we were ready, word was brought us, that Sir Clement Willoughby was in the drawing-room. He introduced himſelf under the pretence of enquiring after all our healths, and entered the room with the eaſy air of an old acquaintance; though Mrs. Mirvan confeſſes that he ſeemed embarraſſed, when he found how coldly he was received, not only by the Captain, but by herſelf.

I was extremely diſconcerted at the thoughts of ſeeing this man again, and did not go down ſtairs till I was called to tea. He was then deeply engaged in a diſcourſe upon French manners with Madame Duval and the Captain, and the ſubject ſeemed ſo entirely to engroſs him, that he did not, at firſt, obſerve my entrance into the room. Their converſation was ſupported with great vehemence; the Captain roughly maintaining the ſuperiority of the Engliſh in every particular, and Madame Duval warmly refuſing to allow of it in any; while Sir Clement exerted all his powers of argument and of ridicule to ſecond and ſtrengthen whatever was advanced by the Captain: for he had the ſagacity to diſcover, that he could

could take no method so effectual for making the master of the house his friend, as to make Madame Duval his enemy: and indeed, in a very short time, he had reason to congratulate himself upon his successful discernment.

As soon as he saw me, he made a most respectful bow, and hoped I had not suffered from the fatigue of the ridotto: I made no other answer than a slight inclination of the head, for I was very much ashamed of that whole affair. He then returned to the disputants, where he managed the argument so skilfully, at once provoking Madame Duval, and delighting the Captain, that I could not forbear admiring his address, though I condemned his subtlety. Mrs. Mirvan, dreading such violent antagonists, attempted frequently to change the subject; and she might have succeeded, but for the interposition of Sir Clement, who would not suffer it to be given up, and supported it with such humour and satire, that he seems to have won the Captain's heart; though their united forces so enraged and overpowered Madame Duval, that she really trembled with passion.

I was very glad when Mrs. Mirvan said it was time to be gone. Sir Clement arose to take leave; but the Captain very cordially invited him to join our party: he *had*

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an engagement, he said, but would give it up to have that pleasure.

Some little confusion ensued in regard to our manner of setting off: Mrs. Mirvan offered Madame Duval a place in her coach, and proposed that we four females should go all together: however, this she rejected, declaring she would by no means go so far without a gentleman, and wondering so polite a lady could make *so English* a proposal. Sir Clement Willoughby said his chariot was waiting at the door, and begged to know if it could be of any use. It was, at last, decided, that a hackney-coach should be called for Monsieur Du Bois and Madame Duval, in which the Captain, and, at his request, Sir Clement, went also; Mrs. and Miss Mirvan and I had a peaceful and comfortable ride by ourselves.

I doubt not but they quarrelled all the way; for when we met at Ranelagh, every one seemed out of humour: and, though we joined parties, poor Madame Duval was avoided as much as possible by all but me.

The room was so very much crowded, that, but for the uncommon assiduity of Sir Clement Willoughby, we should not have been able to procure a box (which is the name

name given to the arched receſſes that are appropriated for tea-parties) till half the company had retired. As we were taking poſſeſſion of our places, ſome ladies of Mrs. Mirvan's acquaintance ſtopped to ſpeak to her, and perſuaded her to *take a round* with them. When ſhe returned to us, what was my ſurpriſe, to ſee that Lord Orville had joined her party! The ladies walked on; Mrs. Mirvan ſeated herſelf, and made a ſlight, though reſpectful, invitation to Lord Orville to drink his tea with us, which, to my no ſmall conſternation, he accepted.

I felt a confuſion unſpeakable at again ſeeing him, from the recollection of the ridotto adventure: nor did my ſituation leſſen it, for I was ſeated between Madame Duval and Sir Clement, who ſeemed as little as myſelf to deſire Lord Orville's preſence. Indeed, the continual wrangling and ill-breeding of Captain Mirvan and Madame Duval, made me bluſh that I belonged to them. And poor Mrs Mirvan and her amiable daughter had ſtill leſs reaſon to be ſatisfied.

A general ſilence enſued after he was ſeated: his appearance, from different motives, gave a univerſal reſtraint to every body. What his own reaſons were for ho-

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nouring us with his company, I cannot imagine, unleſs, indeed, he had a curioſity to know whether I ſhould invent any new impertinence concerning him.

The firſt ſpeech was made by Madame Duval, who ſaid, "It's quite a ſhocking thing to ſee ladies come to ſo genteel a place as Ranelagh with hats on; it has a monſtrous vulgar look: I can't think what they wear them for. There's no ſuch a thing to be ſeen in Paris."

"Indeed," cried Sir Clement, "I muſt own myſelf no advocate for hats; I am ſorry the ladies ever invented or adopted ſo tantalizing a faſhion; for, where there is beauty, they only ſerve to ſhade it, and where there is none, to excite a moſt unavailing curioſity. I fancy they were originally worn by ſome young and whimſical coquet."

"More likely," anſwered the Captain, "they were invented by ſome wrinkled old hag, who'd a mind for to keep the young fellows in chace, let them be never ſo weary."

"I don't know what you may do in England," cried Madame Duval, "but I know in Paris no woman need n't be at ſuch a trouble as that, to be taken very genteel notice of."

"Why, will you pretend for to ſay," returned the Captain, "that they don't diſtinguiſh

tinguiſh the old from the young there as well as here?"

"They don't make no diſtinguiſhments at all," ſaid ſhe; "they're vaſtly too polite."

"More fools they!" cried the Captain, ſneeringly.

"Would to Heaven," cried Sir Clement, "that, for our own ſakes, we Engliſhmen too were bleſt with ſo accommodating a blindneſs!"

"Why the devil do you make ſuch a prayer as that?" demanded the Captain: "them are the firſt fooliſh words I've heard you ſpeak; but I ſuppoſe you're not much uſed to that ſort of work. Did you ever make a prayer before, ſince you were a ſniveler?"

"Ay, now," cried Madame Duval, "that's another of the unpoliteneſſes of you Engliſh, to go to talking of ſuch things as that: now in Paris, nobody never ſays nothing about religion, no more than about politics."

"Why then," anſwered he, "it's a ſign they take no more care of their ſouls than of their country, and ſo both one and t'other go to old Nick."

"Well, if they do," ſaid ſhe, "who's the worſe, ſo long as they don't ſay nothing about it? it's the tireſomeſt thing in the

world to be always talking of them sort of things, and nobody that's ever been abroad troubles their heads about them."

"Pray then," cried the Captain, "since you know so much of the matter, be so good as to tell us what they *do* trouble their heads about? — hay, Sir Clement! ha'n't we a right to know that much?"

"A very comprehensive question," said Sir Clement, "and I expect much instruction from the lady's answer."

"Come, Madam," continued the Captain, "never flinch; speak at once; don't stop for thinking."

"I assure you I am not going," answered she; "for as to what they *do* do, why they've enough to do, I promise you, what with one thing or another."

"But *what*, *what* do they do, these famous *Monseers?*" demanded the Captain; "can't you tell us? do they game?—or drink?—or fiddle?—or are they jockies?—or do they spend all their time in flummering old women?"

"As to that, Sir,—but indeed I shan't trouble myself to answer such a parcel of low questions, so don't ask me no more about it." And then, to my great vexation, turning to Lord Orville, she said, "Pray, Sir, was you ever in Paris?"

He only bowed.

"And

"And pray, Sir, how did you like it?"

This *comprehenſive* queſtion, as Sir Clement would have called it, though it made him ſmile, alſo made him heſitate; however, his anſwer was expreſſive of his approbation.

"I thought you would like it, Sir, becauſe you look ſo like a gentleman. As to the Captain, and as to that other gentleman, why they may very well not like what they don't know: for I ſuppoſe, Sir, you was never abroad?"

"Only three years, Ma'am," anſwered Sir Clement, drily.

"Well, that's very ſurpriſing! I ſhould never have thought it: however, I dare ſay you only kept company with the Engliſh."

"Why pray, who *ſhould* he keep company with?" cried the Captain: "what, I ſuppoſe you'd have him aſhamed of his own nation, like ſome other people not a thouſand miles off, on purpoſe to make his own nation aſhamed of him?"

"I'm ſure it wou'd be a very good thing if you'd go abroad yourſelf."

"How will you make out that, hay, Madam? come, pleaſe to tell me, where wou'd be the good of that?"

"Where! why a great deal. They'd make quite another perſon of you."

"What, I ſuppoſe you'd have me learn

to

to cut capers?—and dreſs like a monkey?—and palaver in French gibberiſh?—hay, would you?—And powder, and daub, and make myſelf up, like ſome other folks?"

"I would have you learn to be more politer, Sir, and not to talk to ladies in ſuch a rude, old-faſhion way as this. You, Sir, as have been in Paris" (again addreſſing herſelf to Lord Orville) "can tell this Engliſh gentleman how he'd be deſpiſed, if he was to talk in ſuch an ungenteel manner as this, before any foreigners. Why there is n't a hair-dreſſer, nor a ſhoe-maker, nor nobody, that would n't bluſh to be in your company."

"Why look ye, Madam," anſwered the Captain, "as to your hair-pinchers and ſhoe-blacks, you may puff off their manners, and welcome; and I am heartily glad you like 'em ſo well; but as to me, ſince you muſt needs make ſo free of your advice, I muſt e'en tell you, I never kept company with any ſuch gentry."

"Come, ladies and gentlemen," ſaid Mrs. Mirvan, "as many of you as have done tea, I invite to walk with me." Maria and I ſtarted up inſtantly; Lord Orville followed; and I queſtion whether we were not half round the room ere the angry diſputants knew that we had left the box.

As the huſband of Mrs. Mirvan had

borne so large a share in this disagreeable altercation, Lord Orville forbore to make any comments upon it; so that the subject was immediately dropt, and the conversation became calmly sociable, and politely chearful, and, to every body but me, must have been highly agreeable:—but, as to myself, I was so eagerly desirous of making some apology to Lord Orville for the impertinence of which he must have thought me guilty at the ridotto, and yet so utterly unable to assume sufficient courage to speak to him concerning an affair in which I had so terribly exposed myself, that I hardly ventured to say a word all the time we were walking. Besides, the knowledge of his contemptuous opinion, haunted and dispirited me, and made me fear he might possibly misconstrue whatever I should say. So that, far from enjoying a conversation which might, at any other time, have delighted me, I continued silent, uncomfortable, and ashamed. O Sir, shall I ever again involve myself in so foolish an embarrassment? I am sure, that if I do, I shall deserve yet greater mortification.

We were not joined by the rest of the party till we had taken three or four turns round the room, and then they were so quarrelsome, that Mrs. Mirvan complained of being fatigued, and proposed going

home. No one dissented. Lord Orville joined another party, having first made an offer of his services, which the gentlemen declined, and we proceeded to an outward room, where we waited for the carriages. It was settled that we should return to town in the same manner we came to Ranelagh, and, accordingly, Monsieur Du Bois handed Madame Duval into a hackney-coach, and was just preparing to follow her, when she screamed, and jumpt hastily out, declaring she was wet through all her clothes. Indeed, upon examination, the coach was found to be in a dismal condition; for the weather proved very bad, and the rain had, though I know not how, made its way into the carriage.

Mrs. and Miss Mirvan, and myself, were already disposed of as before; but no sooner did the Captain hear this account, than, without any ceremony, he was so civil as to immediately take possession of the vacant seat in his own coach, leaving Madame Duval and Monsieur Du Bois to take care of themselves. As to Sir Clement Willoughby, his own chariot was in waiting.

I instantly begged permission to offer Madame Duval my own place, and made a motion to get out; but Mrs. Mirvan stopped me, saying that I should then be ob-

liged to return to town with only the foreigner, or Sir Clement.

"O never mind the old Beldame," cried the Captain, "she's weather-proof, I'll answer for her; and besides, as we are all, I hope, *English*, why she'll meet with no worse than she expects from us."

"I do not mean to defend her," said Mrs. Mirvan; "but indeed, as she belongs to our party, we cannot, with any decency, leave the place, till she is, by some means, accommodated."

"Lord, my dear," cried the Captain, whom the distress of Madame Duval had put into very good humour, "why she'll break her heart, if she meets with any civility from a filthy Englishman."

Mrs. Mirvan, however, prevailed, and we all got out of the coach, to wait till Madame Duval could meet with some better carriage. We found her, attended by Monsieur Du Bois, standing amongst the servants, and very busy in wiping her negligee, and endeavouring to save it from being stained by the wet, as she said it was a new Lyons silk. Sir Clement Willoughby offered her the use of his chariot, but she had been too much piqued by his raillery to accept it. We waited some time, but in vain, for no hackney-coach could be procured. The Captain, at last, was persuaded

ſuaded to accompany Sir Clement himſelf, and we four females were handed into Mrs. Mirvan's carriage, though not before Madame Duval had inſiſted upon our making room for Monſieur Du Bois, to which the Captain only conſented in preference to being incommoded by him in Sir Clement's chariot.

Our party drove off firſt. We were ſilent and unſociable; for the difficulties attending this arrangement had made every one languid and fatigued. Unſociable, I muſt own, we continued; but very ſhort was the duration of our ſilence, as we had not proceeded thirty yards, before every voice was heard at once,—for the coach broke down! I ſuppoſe we concluded of courſe, that we were all half killed, by the violent ſhrieks that ſeemed to come from every mouth. The chariot was ſtopped, the ſervants came to our aſſiſtance, and we were taken out of the carriage, without having been at all hurt. The night was dark and wet; but I had ſcarce touched the ground, when I was lifted ſuddenly from it, by Sir Clement Willoughby, who begged permiſſion to aſſiſt me, though he did not wait to have it granted, but carried me in his arms back to Ranelagh.

He enquired very earneſtly if I was not hurt by the accident? I aſſured him I was

perfectly safe, and free from injury, and desired he would leave me, and return to the rest of the party, for I was very uneasy to know whether they had been equally fortunate. He told me he was happy in being honoured with my commands, and would joyfully execute them; but insisted upon first conducting me to a warm room, as I had not wholly escaped being wet. He did not regard my objections, but made me follow him to an apartment, where we found an excellent fire, and some company waiting for carriages. I readily accepted a seat, and then begged he would go.

And go, indeed, he did; but he returned in a moment, telling me that the rain was more violent than ever, and that he had sent his servants to offer their assistance, and acquaint *the Mirvans* of my situation. I was very mad that he would not go himself; but as my acquaintance with him was so very slight, I did not think proper to urge him contrary to his inclination.

Well, he drew a chair close to mine, and, after again enquiring how I did, said, in a low voice, "You will pardon me, Miss Anville, if the eagerness I feel to vindicate myself, induces me to snatch this opportunity of making sincere acknowledgments for the impertinence with which I tormented you at the last ridotto. I can assure you,

Madam,

Madam, I have been a true and sorrowful penitent ever since; but—shall I tell you honestly what encouraged me to——"

He stopt; but I said nothing, for I thought instantly of the conversation Miss Mirvan had overheard, and supposed he was going to tell me himself what part Lord Orville had borne in it; and really I did not wish to hear it repeated. Indeed, the rest of his speech convinces me that such was his intention; with what view, I know not, except to make a merit of his defending me.

"And yet," he continued, "my excuse may only expose my own credulity, and want of judgment and penetration. I will, therefore, merely beseech your pardon, and hope that some future time——"

Just then the door was opened by Sir Clement's servant, and I had the pleasure of seeing the Captain, Mrs. and Miss Mirvan, enter the room.

"O ho," cried the former, "you have got a good warm birth here; but we shall beat up your quarters. Here, Lucy, Moll, come to the fire, and dry your trumpery. But, hey-day,—why where's old Madam French?"

"Good God," cried I, "is not Madame Duval then with you?"

"With me! No,—thank God."

I was very uneasy to know what might have become of her, and, if they would have suffered me, I should have gone out in search of her myself; but all the servants were dispatched to find her, and the Captain said we might be very sure her *French beau* would take care of her.

We waited some time without any tidings, and were soon the only party in the room. My uneasiness increased so much, that Sir Clement now made a voluntary offer of seeking her. However, the same moment that he opened the door with this design, she presented herself at it, attended by Monsieur Du Bois.

"I was this instant, Madam," said he, "coming to see for you."

"You are mighty good, truly," cried she, "to come when all the mischief's over."

She then entered,—in such a condition! —entirely covered with mud, and in so great a rage, it was with difficulty she could speak. We all expressed our concern, and offered our assistance,—except the Captain; who no sooner beheld her, than he burst into a loud laugh.

We endeavoured, by our enquiries and condolements, to prevent her attending to him; and she was, for some time, so wholly engrossed by her anger and her distress, that

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we ſucceeded without much trouble. We begged her to inform us how this accident had happened. "How!" repeated ſhe,—"why it was all along of your all going away,—and there poor Monſieur Du Bois—but it was n't his fault,—for he's as bad off as me."

All eyes were then turned to Monſieur Du Bois, whoſe clothes were in the ſame miſerable plight with thoſe of Madame Duval, and who, wet, ſhivering, and diſconſolate, had crept to the fire.

The Captain laughed yet more heartily; while Mrs. Mirvan, aſhamed of his rudeneſs, repeated her enquiries to Madame Duval; who, anſwered, "Why, as we were a-coming along, all in the rain, Monſieur Du Bois was ſo obliging, though I'm ſure it was an unlucky obligingneſs for me, as to lift me up in his arms, to carry me over a place that was ancle-deep in mud; but inſtead of my being ever the better for it, juſt as we were in the worſt part,—I'm ſure I wiſh we had been fifty miles off,—for, ſomehow or other, his foot ſlipt,—at leaſt, I ſuppoſe ſo,—though I can't think how it happened, for I'm no ſuch great weight,—but, however that was, down we both came together, all in the mud; and the more we tried to get up, the more deeper we got covered with the naſtineſs—and my new

Lyons negligee, too, quite ſpoilt!—however, it's well we got up at all, for we might have laid there till now, for aught you all cared; for nobody never came near us."

This recital put the Captain into an extacy; he went from the lady to the gentleman, and from the gentleman to the lady, to enjoy alternately the ſight of their diſtreſs. He really ſhouted with pleaſure; and, ſhaking Monſieur Du Bois ſtrenuouſly by the hand, wiſhed him joy of having *touched Engliſh Ground*; and then he held a candle to Madame Duval, that he might have a more complete view of her diſaſter, declaring repeatedly, that he had never been better pleaſed in his life.

The rage of poor Madame Duval was unſpeakable; ſhe daſhed the candle out of his hand, ſtamped upon the floor, and, at laſt, ſpit in his face.

This action ſeemed immediately to calm them both, as the joy of the Captain was converted into reſentment, and the wrath of Madame Duval into fear; for he put his hands upon her ſhoulders, and gave her ſo violent a ſhake, that ſhe ſcreamed out for help; aſſuring her, at the ſame time, that if ſhe had been one ounce leſs old, or leſs ugly, ſhe ſhould have had it all returned on her own face.

Monſieur

Monſieur Du Bois, who had ſeated himſelf very quietly at the fire, approached them, and expoſtulated very warmly with the Captain; but he was neither underſtood nor regarded, and Madame Duval was not releaſed, till ſhe quite ſobbed with paſſion.

When they were parted, I entreated her to permit the woman who has the charge of the ladies cloaks to aſſiſt in drying her clothes; ſhe conſented, and we did what was poſſible to ſave her from catching cold. We were obliged to wait in this diſagreeable ſituation near an hour, before a hackney-coach could be found; and then we were diſpoſed in the ſame manner as before our accident.

I am going this morning to ſee poor Madame Duval, and to enquire after her health, which I think muſt have ſuffered by her laſt night's misfortunes; though, indeed, ſhe ſeems to be naturally ſtrong and hearty.

Adieu, my dear Sir, till to-morrow.

LETTER XVII.

Evelina in continuation.

Friday Morning, April 15.

SIR Clement Willoughby called here yesterday at noon, and Captain Mirvan invited him to dinner. For my part, I spent the day in a manner the most uncomfortable imaginable.

I found Madame Duval at breakfast in bed, though Monsieur Du Bois was in the chamber; which so much astonished me, that I was, involuntarily, retiring, without considering how odd an appearance my retreat would have, when Madame Duval called me back, and laughed very heartily at my ignorance of foreign customs.

The conversation, however, very soon took a more serious turn; for she began, with great bitterness, to inveigh against the *barbarous brutality of that fellow the Captain*, and the horrible ill-breeding of the English in general, declaring she should make her escape with all expedition from so *beastly a nation*. But nothing can be more strangely absurd, than to hear politeness recommended in language so repugnant to it as that of Madam Duval.

She lamented, very mournfully, the fate of her

her Lyons silk, and protested she had rather have parted with all the rest of her wardrobe, because it was the first gown she had bought to wear upon leaving off her weeds. She has a very bad cold, and Monsieur Du Bois is so hoarse, he can hardly speak.

She insisted upon my staying with her all day, as she intended, she said, to introduce me to some of my own relations. I would very fain have excused myself, but she did not allow me any choice.

Till the arrival of these relations, one continued series of questions on her side, and of answers on mine, filled up all the time we passed together. Her curiosity was insatiable; she enquired into every action of my life, and every particular that had fallen under my observation, in the lives of all I knew. Again, she was so cruel as to avow the most inveterate rancour against the sole benefactor her deserted child and grandchild have met with; and such was the indignation her ingratitude raised, that I would actually have quitted her presence and house, had she not, in a manner the most peremptory, absolutely forbid me. But what, good Heaven! can induce her to such shocking injustice? O my friend and father! I have no command of myself when this subject is started.

She talked very much of taking me to Paris,

Paris, and said I greatly wanted the polish of a French education. She lamented that I had been brought up in the country, which, she observed, had given me a very *bumpkinish air*. However, she bid me not despair, for she had known many girls, much worse than me, who had become very fine ladies after a few years residence abroad; and she particularly instanced a Miss Polly Moore, daughter of a chandler's-shop woman, who, by an accident not worth relating, happened to be sent to Paris, where, from an aukward ill-bred girl, she so much improved, that she has since been taken for a woman of quality.

The relations to whom she was pleased to introduce me, consisted of a Mr. Branghton, who is her nephew, and three of his children, the eldest of which is a son, and the two younger are daughters.

Mr. Branghton appears about forty years of age. He does not seem to want a common understanding, though he is very contracted and prejudiced: he has spent his whole time in the city, and I believe feels a great contempt for all who reside elsewhere.

His son seems weaker in his understanding, and more gay in his temper; but his gaiety is that of a foolish, over-grown school-boy, whose mirth consists in noise and disturbance. He disdains his father for his close

close attention to business, and love of money, though he seems himself to have no talents, spirit, or generosity, to make him superior to either. His chief delight appears to be tormenting and ridiculing his sisters, who, in return, most heartily despise him.

Miss Branghton, the eldest daughter, is by no means ugly, but looks proud, ill-tempered, and conceited. She hates the city, though without knowing why; for it is easy to discover she has lived no where else.

Miss Polly Branghton is rather pretty, very foolish, very ignorant, very giddy, and, I believe, very good-natured.

The first half hour was allotted to *making themselves comfortable*, for they complained of having had a very dirty walk, as they came on foot from Snow-Hill, where Mr. Branghton keeps a silver-smith's shop; and the young ladies had not only their coats to brush, and shoes to dry, but to adjust their head-dress, which their bonnets had totally discomposed.

The manner in which Madame Duval was pleased to introduce me to this family, extremely shocked me. "Here, my dears," said she, "here's a relation you little thought of: but you must know my poor daughter Caroline had this child after she run away from me,—though I never knew nothing

nothing of it, not I, for a long while after; for they took care to keep it a secret from me, though the poor child has never a friend in the world besides."

"Miss seems very tender-hearted, aunt," said Miss Polly, "and to be sure she's not to blame for her mama's undutifulness, for she could n't help it."

"Lord, no," answered she, "and I never took no notice of it to her; for indeed, as to that, my own poor daughter was n't so much to blame as you may think, for she'd never have gone astray, if it had not been for that meddling old parson I told you of."

"If aunt pleases," said young Mr. Branghton, "we'll talk o' somewhat else, for Miss looks very uneasy-like."

The next subject that was chosen, was the age of the three young Branghtons and myself. The son is twenty; the daughters, upon hearing that I was seventeen, said that was just the age of Miss Polly; but their brother, after a long dispute, proved that she was two years older, to the great anger of both sisters, who agreed that he was very ill-natured and spiteful.

When this point was settled, the question was put, Which was tallest?—We were desired to measure, as the Branghtons were all of different opinions. None of them,

them, however, disputed my being the tallest in the company, but, in regard to one another they were extremely quarrelsome: the brother insisted upon their measuring *fair*, and not with *heads* and *heels*; but they would by no means consent to lose those privileges of our sex, and therefore the young man was *cast*, as shortest; though he appealed to all present upon the injustice of the decree.

This ceremony over, the young ladies began, very freely, to examine my dress, and to interrogate me concerning it. "This apron's your own work, I suppose, Miss? but these sprigs a'nt in fashion now. Pray, if it is not impertinent, what might you give a yard for this lutestring?—Do you make your own caps, Miss?—" and many other questions equally interesting and well-bred.

They then asked me *how I liked London?* and whether I should not think the country a very *dull place*, when I returned thither? "Miss must try if she can't get a good husband," said Mr. Branghton, "and then she may stay and live here."

The next topic was public places, or rather the theatres, for they knew of no other; and the merits and defects of all the actors and actresses were discussed: the young man here took the lead, and seemed to be very conversant on the subject. But during

during this time, what was my concern, and, suffer me to add, my indignation, when I found, by some words I occasionally heard, that Madame Duval was entertaining Mr. Branghton with all the most secret and cruel particulars of my situation! The eldest daughter was soon drawn to them by the recital; the youngest and the son still kept their places, intending, I believe, to divert me, though the conversation was all their own.

In a few minutes, Miss Branghton, coming suddenly up to her sister, exclaimed, "Lord, Polly, only think! Miss never saw her papa!"

"Lord, how odd!" cried the other; "why then, Miss, I suppose you would n't know him?"

This was quite too much for me; I rose hastily, and ran out of the room: but I soon regretted I had so little command of myself, for the two sisters both followed, and insisted upon comforting me, notwithstanding my earnest entreaties to be left alone.

As soon as I returned to the company, Madame Duval said, "Why, my dear, what was the matter with you? why did you run away so?"

This question almost made me run again, for I knew not how to answer it.

But,

But, is it not very extraordinary, that she can put me in situations so shocking, and then wonder to find me sensible of any concern?

Mr. Branghton junior now enquired of me, whether I had seen the Tower, or St. Paul's church? and upon my answering in the negative, they proposed making a party to shew them to me. Among other questions, they also asked if I had ever seen *such a thing as an Opera?* I told them I had. "Well," said Mr. Branghton, "I never saw one in my life, so long as I've lived in London, and I never desire to see one, if I live here as much longer."

"Lord, Papa," cried Miss Polly, "why not? you might as well for once, for the curiosity of the thing: besides, Miss Pomfret saw one, and she says it was very pretty."

"Miss will think us very vulgar," said Miss Branghton, "to live in London, and never have been to an Opera; but it's no fault of mine, I assure you, Miss, only Papa don't like to go."

The result was, that a party was proposed, and agreed to, for some early opportunity. I did not dare contradict them; but I said that my time, while I remained in town, was at the disposal of Mrs. Mirvan.

However,

However, I am sure I will not attend them, if I can possibly avoid so doing.

When we parted, Madame Duval desired to see me the next day; and the Branghtons told me, that the first time I went towards Snow-Hill, they should be very glad if I would call upon them.

I wish we may not meet again till that time arrives.

I am sure I shall not be very ambitious of being known to any more of my relations, if they have any resemblance to those whose acquaintance I have been introduced to already.

LETTER XVIII.

Evelina in continuation.

I Had just finished my letter to you this morning, when a violent rapping at the door made me run down stairs; and who should I see in the drawing-room, but—Lord Orville!

He was quite alone, for the family had not assembled to breakfast. He enquired, first of mine, then of the health of Mrs.

and

and Miſs Mirvan, with a degree of concern that rather ſurpriſed me, till he ſaid that he had juſt been informed of the accident we had met with at Ranelagh. He expreſſed his ſorrow upon the occaſion with the utmoſt politeneſs, and lamented that he had not been ſo fortunate as to hear of it in time to offer his ſervices. "But, I think," he added, "Sir Clement Willoughby had the honour of aſſiſting you?"

"He was with Captain Mirvan, my Lord."

"I had heard of his being of your party."

I hope that ſlighty man has not been telling Lord Orville he only aſſiſted *me!* however, he did not purſue the ſubject, but ſaid, "This accident, though extremely unfortunate, will not, I hope, be the means of frightening you from gracing Ranelagh with your preſence in future?"

"Our time, my Lord, for London, is almoſt expired already."

"Indeed! do you leave town ſo very ſoon?"

"O yes, my Lord, our ſtay has already exceeded our intentions."

"Are you, then, ſo particularly partial to the country?"

"We merely came to town, my Lord, to meet Captain Mirvan."

"And does Miss Anville feel no concern at the idea of the many mourners her absence will occasion?"

"O, my Lord,—I'm sure you don't think—" I stopt there, for, indeed, I hardly knew what I was going to say. My foolish embarrassment, I suppose was the cause of what followed;—for he came to me, and took my hand, saying, "I *do* think, that whoever has once seen Miss Anville, must receive an impression never to be forgotten."

This compliment,—from Lord Orville,—so surprised me, that I could not speak; but felt myself change colour, and stood, for some moments, silent, and looking down: however, the instant I recollected my situation, I withdrew my hand, and told him that I would see if Mrs. Mirvan was not dressed. He did not oppose me, so away I went.

I met them all on the stairs, and returned with them to breakfast.

I have since been extremely angry with myself for neglecting so excellent an opportunity of apologizing for my behaviour at the ridotto: but, to own the truth, that affair never once occurred to me during the short *tête-à-tête* which we had together. But, if ever we should happen to be so situated again, I will certainly mention it;

for

for I am inexpreſſibly concerned at the thought of his harbouring an opinion that I am bold or impertinent, and I could almoſt kill myſelf for having given him the ſhadow of a reaſon for ſo ſhocking an idea.

But was it not very odd that he ſhould make me ſuch a compliment? I expected it not from him;—but gallantry, I believe, is common to all men, whatever other qualities they may have in particular.

Our breakfaſt was the moſt agreeable meal, if it may be called a *meal*, that we have had ſince we came to town. Indeed, but for Madame Duval I ſhould like London extremely.

The converſation of Lord Orville is really delightful. His manners are ſo elegant, ſo gentle, ſo unaſſuming, that they at once engage eſteem, and diffuſe complacence. Far from being indolently ſatisfied with his own accompliſhments, as I have already obſerved many men here are, though without any pretenſions to his merit, he is moſt aſſiduouſly attentive to pleaſe and to ſerve all who are in his company; and, though his ſucceſs is invariable, he never manifeſts the ſmalleſt degree of conſciouſneſs.

I could wiſh that *you*, my deareſt Sir, knew Lord Orville, becauſe I am ſure you would love him; and I have felt that wiſh for

for no other person I have seen since I came to London. I sometimes imagine, that, when his youth is flown, his vivacity abated, and his life is devoted to retirement, he will, perhaps, resemble him whom I most love and honour. His present sweetness, politeness, and diffidence, seem to promise in future the same benevolence, dignity, and goodness. But I must not expatiate upon this subject.

When Lord Orville was gone,—and he made but a very short visit,—I was preparing, most reluctantly, to wait upon Madame Duval; but Mrs. Mirvan proposed to the Captain, that she should be invited to dinner in Queen-Ann-street, and he readily consented, for he said he wished to ask after her Lyons negligee.

The invitation is accepted, and we expect her every moment. But to me, it is very strange, that a woman, who is the uncontrolled mistress of her time, fortune, and actions, should chuse to expose herself voluntarily to the rudeness of a man who is openly determined to make her his sport. But she has very few acquaintance, and, I fancy, scarce knows how to employ herself.

How great is my obligation to Mrs. Mirvan, for bestowing her time in a manner so disagreeable to herself, merely to promote my happiness! every dispute in which her undeserving

undeſerving huſband engages, is productive of pain, and uneaſineſs to herſelf; of this I am ſo ſenſible, that I even beſought her not to ſend to Madame Duval, but ſhe declared ſhe could not bear to have me paſs all my time, while in town, with her only. Indeed ſhe could not be more kind to me, were ſhe your daughter.

LETTER XIX.

Evelina in continuation.

Saturday Morning, April 16.

MADAME Duval was accompanied by Monſieur Du Bois. I am ſurpriſed that ſhe ſhould chuſe to introduce him where he is ſo unwelcome; and, indeed, it is ſtrange that they ſhould be ſo conſtantly together: though I believe I ſhould not have taken notice of it, but that Captain Mirvan is perpetually rallying me upon my *grand-mama's beau.*

They were both received by Mrs. Mirvan with her uſual good-breeding; but the Captain, moſt provokingly, attacked her immediately, ſaying, "Now, Madam, you that have lived abroad, pleaſe to tell me this here; Which did you like beſt, the *warm*

room at Ranelagh, or the *cold bath* you went into afterwards? though, I assure you, you look so well that I should advise you to take another dip."

"*Ma foi*, Sir," cried she, "nobody asked for your advice, so you may as well keep it to yourself: besides, it's no such great joke, to be splashed, and to catch cold, and spoil all one's things, whatever you may think of it."

"*Splashed*, quoth-a!—why I thought you were soused all over.—Come, come, don't mince the matter, never spoil a good story; you know you had n't a dry thread about you—'Fore George, I shall never think on't without hallowing! such a poor, forlorn, draggle-tailed—*gentlewoman!* and poor *Monseer* French, here, like a drowned rat, by your side!—"

"Well, the worse pickle we was in, so much the worser in you not to help us, for you knowed where we were fast enough, because, while I laid in the mud, I'm pretty sure I heard you snigger; so it's like enough you jostled us down yourself, for Monsieur Du Bois says, that he is sure he had a great jolt given him, or he should n't have fell."

The Captain laughed so immoderately, that he really gave me also a suspicion that he was not entirely innocent of the charge: however, he disclaimed it very peremptorily.

"Why

"Why then," continued she, "if you did n't do that, why did n't you come to help us?"

"Who, I?—what, do you suppose I had forgot I was an *Englishman*, a filthy, beastly *Englishman?*"

"Very well, Sir, very well; but I was a fool to expect any better, for it's all of a piece with the rest; you know you wanted to fling me out of the coach-window, the very first time ever I see you: but I'll never go to Ranelagh with you no more, that I'm resolved; for I dare say, if the horses had runn'd over me, as I laid in that nastiness, you'd never have stirred a step to save me."

"Lord, no, to be sure, Ma'am, not for the world! I know your opinion of our nation too well, to affront you by supposing a *Frenchman* would want *my* assistance to protect you. Did you think that *Monseer* here, and I, had changed characters, and that he should pop you into the mud, and I help you out of it? Ha, ha, ha!"

"O, very well, Sir, laugh on, it's like your manners; however, if poor Monsieur Du Bois had n't met with that unlucky accident himself, I should n't have wanted nobody's help."

"O, I promise you, Madam, you'd never have had mine; I knew my distance better;

and as to your being a little ducked, or so, why, to be sure, *Monseer* and you settled that between yourselves; so it was no business of mine."

"What, then, I suppose, you want to make me believe as Monsieur Du Bois served me that trick o' purpose?"

"O' purpose! ay, certainly, who ever doubted that? Do you think a *Frenchman* ever made a blunder? If he had been some clumsy-footed *English* fellow, indeed, it might have been accidental: but what the devil signifies all your hopping and capering with your dancing-masters, if you can't balance yourselves upright?"

In the midst of this dialogue, Sir Clement Willoughby made his appearance. He affects to enter the house with the freedom of an old acquaintance, and this very *easiness*, which, to me, is astonishing, is what most particularly recommends him to the Captain. Indeed, he seems very successfully to study all the humours of that gentleman.

After having heartily welcomed him, "You are just come in time, my boy," said he, "to settle a little matter of a dispute between this here gentlewoman and I; do you know, she has been trying to persuade me, that she did not above half like the ducking *Monseer* gave her t'other night."

"I should

"I ſhould have hoped," (ſaid Sir Clement, with the utmoſt gravity) "that the friendſhip ſubſiſting between that lady and gentleman, would have guarded them againſt any actions profeſſedly diſagreeable to each other; but, probably, they might not have diſcuſſed the matter previouſly; in which caſe, the gentleman, I muſt own, ſeems to have been guilty of inattention, ſince, in my humble opinion, it was his buſineſs firſt to have enquired whether the lady preferred ſoft, or hard ground, before he dropt her."

"O very fine, Gentlemen, very fine," cried Madame Duval, "you may try to ſet us together by the ears as much as you will; but I'm not ſuch an ignorant perſon as to be made a fool of ſo eaſily; ſo you need n't talk no more about it, for I ſees into your deſigns."

Monſieur Du Bois, who was juſt able to diſcover the ſubject upon which the converſation turned, made his defence, in French, with great ſolemnity: he hoped, he ſaid, that the company would at leaſt acknowledge, he did not come from a nation of brutes, and conſequently, that to wilfully offend any lady, was, to him, utterly impoſſible; but that, on the contrary, in endeavouring, as was his duty, to ſave and guard her, he had himſelf ſuffered, in a

manner which he would forbear to relate, but which, he greatly apprehended, he ſhould feel the ill effects of for many months; and then, with a countenance exceedingly lengthened, he added, that he hoped it would not be attributed to him as national prejudice, when he owned that he muſt, to the beſt of his memory, aver, that his unfortunate fall was owing to a ſudden, but violent puſh, which, he was ſhocked to ſay, ſome malevolent perſon, with a deſign to his injury, muſt certainly have given him; but whether with a view to mortify him, by making him let the lady fall, or whether merely to ſpoil his clothes, he could not pretend to determine.

This diſputation was, at laſt, concluded by Mrs. Mirvan's propoſing that we ſhould all go to Cox's Muſeum. Nobody objected, and carriages were immediately ordered.

In our way down ſtairs, Madame Duval, in a very paſſionate manner, ſaid, "*Ma foi*, if I would n't give fifty guineas only to know who gave us that ſhove!"

This Muſeum is very aſtoniſhing, and very ſuperb; yet, it afforded me but little pleaſure, for it is a mere ſhow, though a wonderful one.

Sir Clement Willoughby, in our walk round the room, aſked me what my opinion was of this brilliant *ſpectacle?*

"It

"It is very fine, and very ingenious," answered I, "and yet—I don't know how it is,—but I seem to *miss something*."

"Excellently answered!" cried he, "you have exactly defined my own feelings, though in a manner I should never have arrived at. But I was certain your taste was too well formed, to be pleased at the expence of your understanding."

"*Pardi*," cried Madame Duval, "I hope you two is difficult enough! I'm sure if you don't like this, you like nothing; for it's the grandest, prettiest, finest sight that ever I see, in England."

"What," (cried the Captain with a sneer) "I suppose this may be in your French taste? it's like enough, for it's all *kickshaw* work. But, pr'ythee, friend," (turning to the person who explained the devices) "will you tell me the *use* of all this? for I'm not enough of a conjurer to find it out."

"Use, indeed!" (repeated Madame Duval disdainfully) "Lord, if every thing's to be useful!—"

"Why, Sir, as to that, Sir," said our conductor, "the ingenuity of the mechanism,—the beauty of the workmanship,—the—undoubtedly, Sir, any person of taste may easily discern the utility of such extraordinary performances."

"Why then, Sir," answered the Captain,

"your perſon of taſte muſt be either a coxcomb, or a Frenchman; though, for the matter of that, 'tis the ſame thing."

Juſt then, our attention was attracted by a pine-apple, which, ſuddenly opening, diſcovered a neſt of birds, who immediately began to ſing. "Well," cried Madame Duval, "this is prettier than all the reſt! I declare, in all my travels, I never ſee nothing eleganter."

"Hark ye, friend," ſaid the Captain, "haſt never another pine-apple?"

"Sir?——"

"Becauſe, if thou haſt, pr'ythee give it us without the birds; for, d'ye ſee, I'm no Frenchman, and ſhould reliſh ſomething more ſubſtantial."

This entertainment concluded with a concert of mechanical muſic: I cannot explain how it was produced, but the effect was pleaſing. Madame Duval was in extacies; and the Captain flung himſelf into ſo many ridiculous diſtortions, by way of mimicking her, that he engaged the attention of all the company; and, in the midſt of the performance of the Coronation Anthem, while Madame Duval was affecting to beat time, and uttering many expreſſions of delight, he called ſuddenly for ſalts, which a lady, apprehending ſome diſtreſs, politely handed to him, and which, inſtantly

applying to the noſtrils of poor Madame Duval, ſhe involuntarily ſnuffed up ſuch a quantity, that the pain and ſurpriſe made her ſcream aloud. When ſhe recovered, ſhe reproached him, with her uſual vehemence; but he proteſted he had taken that meaſure out of pure friendſhip, as he concluded, from her raptures, that ſhe was going into hyſterics. This excuſe by no means appeaſed her, and they had a violent quarrel; but the only effect her anger had on the Captain, was to encreaſe his diverſion. Indeed, he laughs and talks ſo terribly loud in public, that he frequently makes us aſhamed of belonging to him.

Madame Duval, notwithſtanding her wrath, made no ſcruple of returning to dine in Queen-Anne-ſtreet. Mrs. Mirvan had ſecured places for the play at Drury-Lane Theatre, and, though ever uneaſy in her company, ſhe very politely invited Madame Duval to be of our party; however, ſhe had a bad cold, and choſe to nurſe it. I was ſorry for her indiſpoſition, but I knew not how to be ſorry ſhe did not accompany us, for ſhe is—I muſt not ſay what, but very unlike other people.

LETTER XX.

Evelina in continuation.

OUR places were in the front row of a ſide-box. Sir Clement Willoughby, who knew our intention, was at the door of the Theatre, and handed us from the carriage.

We had not been ſeated five minutes, before Lord Orville, who we ſaw in the ſtage-box, came to us; and he honoured us with his company all the evening. Miſs Mirvan and I both rejoiced that Madame Duval was abſent, as we hoped for the enjoyment of ſome converſation, uninterrupted by her quarrels with the Captain: but I ſoon found that her preſence would have made very little alteration, for ſo far was I from daring to ſpeak, that I knew not where even to look.

The play was Love for Love, and though it is fraught with wit and entertainment, I hope I ſhall never ſee it repreſented again; for it is ſo extremely indelicate,—to uſe the ſofteſt word I can,—that Miſs Mirvan and I were perpetually out of countenance, and could neither make any obſervations ourſelves, nor venture to liſten to thoſe of others. This was the more provoking, as Lord

Lord Orville was in excellent ſpirits, and exceedingly entertaining.

When the Play was over, I flattered myſelf I ſhould be able to look about me with leſs reſtraint, as we intended to ſtay the Farce; but the curtain had hardly dropped, when the box-door opened, and in came Mr. Lovel, the man by whoſe foppery and impertinence I was ſo much teized at the ball where I firſt ſaw Lord Orville.

I turned away my head, and began talking to Miſs Mirvan, for I was deſirous to avoid ſpeaking to him;—but in vain, for as ſoon as he had made his compliments to Lord Orville and Sir Clement Willoughby, who returned them very coldly, he bent his head forward, and ſaid to me, "I hope, Ma'am, you have enjoyed your health ſince I had the honour—I beg ten thouſand pardons, but I proteſt I was going to ſay the honour of *dancing* with you—however, I mean the honour of *ſeeing* you dance?"

He ſpoke with a ſelf-complacency that convinced me he had ſtudied this addreſs, by way of making repriſals for my conduct at the ball: I therefore bowed ſlightly, but made no anſwer.

After a ſhort ſilence, he again called my attention, by ſaying, in an eaſy, negligent way, "I think, Ma'am, you was never in town before?"

"No, Sir."

"So I did presume. Doubtless, Ma'am, every thing must be infinitely novel to you. Our customs, our manners, and *les etiquettes de nous autres*, can have very little resemblance to those you have been used to. I imagine, Ma'am, your retirement is at no very small distance from the capital?"

I was so much disconcerted at this sneering speech, that I said not a word; though I have since thought my vexation both stimulated and delighted him.

"The air we breathe here, however, Ma'am," (continued he, very conceitedly) "though foreign to that you have been accustomed to, has not, I hope, been at variance with your health?"

"Mr. Lovel," said Lord Orville, "could not your *eye* have spared that question?"

"O, my Lord," answered he, "if *health* were the only cause of a lady's bloom, my eye, I grant, had been infallible from the first glance; but—"

"Come, come," cried Mrs. Mirvan, "I must beg no insinuations of that sort; Miss Anville's colour, as you have successfully tried, may, you see, be heightened;—but I assure you, it would be past your skill to lessen it."

"'Pon honour, Madam," returned he, "you wrong me; I presumed not to infer that

that *rouge* was the only ſuccedaneum for health; but, really, I have known ſo many different cauſes for a lady's colour, ſuch as fluſhing,—anger,—*mauvaiſe honte*,—and ſo forth, that I never dare decide to which it may be owing."

"As to ſuch cauſes as them there," cried the Captain, "they muſt belong to thoſe that they keep company with."

"Very true, Captain," ſaid Sir Clement; "the natural complexion has nothing to do with occaſional ſallies of the paſſions, or any accidental cauſes."

"No, truly," returned the Captain, "for now here's me, why I look like any other man juſt now; and yet, if you were to put me in a paſſion, 'fore George you'd ſoon ſee me have as fine a high colour as any painted Jezabel in all this place, be ſhe never ſo bedaubed."

"But," ſaid Lord Orville, "the difference of natural and of artificial colour, ſeems to me very eaſily diſcerned; that of Nature is mottled, and varying; that of art, *ſet*, and *too* ſmooth; it wants that animation, that glow, that *indeſcribable ſomething* which, even now that I ſee it, wholly ſurpaſſes all my powers of expreſſion."

"Your Lordſhip," ſaid Sir Clement, "is univerſally acknowledged to be a *connoiſſeur* in beauty."

"And

"And you, Sir Clement," returned he, "an *enthuſiaſt*."

"I am proud to own it," cried Sir Clement; "in ſuch a cauſe, and before ſuch objects, enthuſiaſm is ſimply the conſequence of not being blind."

"Pr'ythee a truce with all this palavering," cried the Captain, "the women are vain enough already; no need for to puff 'em up more."

"We muſt all ſubmit to the commanding officer," ſaid Sir Clement, "therefore let us call another ſubject. Pray, Ladies, how have you been entertained with the play?"

"Want of entertainment," ſaid Mrs. Mirvan, "is its leaſt fault; but I own there are objections to it, which I ſhould be glad to ſee removed."

"I could have ventured to anſwer for the Ladies," ſaid Lord Orville, "ſince I am ſure this is not a play that can be honoured with their approbation."

"What, I ſuppoſe it is not ſentimental enough!" cried the Captain, "or elſe it's too good for them; for I'll maintain it's one of the beſt comedies in the language, and has more wit in one ſcene, than there is in all the new plays put together."

"For my part," ſaid Mr. Lovel, "I confeſs I ſeldom liſten to the players: one has

has so much to do, in looking about, and finding out one's acquaintance, that, really, one has no time to mind the stage. Pray," —(most affectedly fixing his eyes upon a diamond-ring on his little finger) "pray—what was the play to-night?"

"Why, what the D—l," cried the Captain, "do you come to the play, without knowing what it is?"

"O yes, Sir, yes, very frequently: I have no time to read play-bills; one merely comes to meet one's friends, and shew that one's alive."

"Ha, ha, ha!—and so," cried the Captain, "it costs you five shillings a night, just to shew that you're alive! Well, faith, my friends should all think me dead and under ground, before I'd be at that expence for 'em. Howsomever, this here you may take from me;—they'll find you out fast enough, if you've any thing to give 'em.—And so you've been here all this time, and don't know what the play was?"

"Why, really, Sir, a play requires so much attention,—it is scarce possible to keep awake, if one listens;—for, indeed, by the time it is evening, one has been so fatigued, with dining,—or wine,—or the house,—or studying,—that it is—it is perfectly an impossibility. But, now I think of it, I believe I have a bill in my pocket; O,

ay,

ay, here it is—Love for Love, ay,—true, —ha, ha,—how could I be so stupid!"

"O, easily enough, as to that, I warrant you," said the Captain; "but, by my soul, this is one of the best jokes I ever heard! Come to a play, and not know what it is! —Why, I suppose you would n't have found it out, if they had *fob'd* you off with a scraping of fidlers, or an opera?—Ha! ha! ha!—why now, I should have thought you might have taken some notice of one Mr. *Tattle* that is in this play!"

This sarcasm, which caused a general smile, made him colour: but, turning to the Captain with a look of conceit, which implied that he had a retort ready, he said, "Pray, Sir, give me leave to ask,—what do *you* think of *one Mr. Ben*, who is also in this play?"

The Captain, regarding him with the utmost contempt, answered in a loud voice, "Think of him!—why I think he's a *man!*" And then, staring full in his face, he struck his cane on the ground, with a violence that made him start. He did not, however, chuse to take any notice of this; but, having bit his nails some time, in manifest confusion, he turned very quick to me, and, in a sneering tone of voice, said, "For my part, I was most struck with the *country* young lady, Miss Prue; pray what do *you* think of her, Ma'am?"

"Indeed,

"Indeed, Sir," cried I, very much provoked, "I think—that is, I do not think any thing about her."

"Well, really, Ma'am, you prodigiously surprise me!—*mais, apparemment ce n'est qu'un façon de parler?*—though I should beg your pardon, for probably you do not understand French?"

I made no answer, for I thought his rudeness intolerable; but Sir Clement, with great warmth, said, "I am surprised that you can suppose such an object as Miss Prue would engage the attention of Miss Anville even for a moment."

"O Sir," returned this fop, "'tis the first character in the piece!—so well drawn,—so much the thing!—such true country-breeding,—such rural ignorance!—ha! ha! ha!—'tis most admirably hit off, 'pon honour!"

I could almost have cried, that such impertinence should be levelled at me; and yet, chagrined as I was, I could never behold Lord Orville and this man at the same time, and feel any regret for the cause I had given of displeasure.

"The only female in the play," said Lord Orville, "worthy of being mentioned to these ladies, is Angelica."

"Angelica," cried Sir Clement, "is a noble

noble girl; she tries her lover severely, but she rewards him generously."

"Yet, in a trial so long," said Mrs. Mirvan, "there seems rather too much consciousness of her power."

"Since my opinion has the sanction of Mrs. Mirvan's," added Lord Orville, "I will venture to say, that Angelica bestows her hand rather with the air of a benefactress, than with the tenderness of a mistress. Generosity without delicacy, like wit without judgment, generally gives as much pain as pleasure. The uncertainty in which she keeps Valentine, and her manner of trifling with his temper, give no very favourable idea of her own."

"Well, my Lord," said Mr. Lovel, "it must, however, be owned, that uncertainty is not the *ton* among our ladies at present; nay, indeed, I think they say, though, faith," taking a pinch of snuff, "I hope it is not true—but they say, that *we* now are most shy and backward."

The curtain then drew up, and our conversation ceased. Mr. Lovel, finding we chose to attend to the players, left the box. How strange it is, Sir, that this man, not contented with the large share of foppery and nonsense which he has from nature, should think proper to affect yet more! for what he said of Tattle and of Miss Prue, convinced

convinced me that he really had liſtened to the play, though he was ſo ridiculous and fooliſh as to pretend ignorance.

But how malicious and impertinent in this creature to talk to me in ſuch a manner! I am ſure I hope I ſhall never ſee him again. I ſhould have deſpiſed him heartily as a fop, had he never ſpoken to me at all; but now, that he thinks proper to reſent his ſuppoſed ill-uſage, I am really quite afraid of him.

The entertainment was, The Deuce is in him, which Lord Orville obſerved to be the moſt finiſhed and elegant *petite piece* that was ever written in Engliſh.

In our way home, Mrs. Mirvan put me into ſome conſternation, by ſaying it was evident, from the reſentment which this Mr. Lovel harbours of my conduct, that he would think it a provocation ſufficiently important for a duel, if his courage equalled his wrath.

I am terrified at the very idea. Good Heaven! that a man ſo weak and frivolous ſhould be ſo revengeful! However, if bravery would have excited him to affront Lord Orville, how much reaſon have I to rejoice, that cowardice makes him contented with venting his ſpleen upon me! But we ſhall leave town ſoon, and, I hope, ſee him no more.

It was ſome conſolation to me, to hear, from

from Miſs Mirvan, that, while he was ſpeaking to me ſo cavalierly, Lord Orville regarded him with great indignation.

But, really, I think there ought to be a book, of the laws and cuſtoms *à-la-mode*, preſented to all young people upon their firſt introduction into public company.

To-night we go to the opera, where I expect very great pleaſure. We ſhall have the ſame party as at the play; for Lord Orville ſaid he ſhould be there, and would look for us.

LETTER XXI.

Evelina in continuation.

I HAVE a volume to write of the adventures of yeſterday.

In the afternoon,—at Berry Hill, I ſhould have ſaid the *evening*, for it was almoſt ſix o'clock,—while Miſs Mirvan and I were dreſſing for the opera, and in high ſpirits, from the expectation of great entertainment and pleaſure, we heard a carriage ſtop at the door, and concluded that Sir Clement Willoughby, with his uſual aſſiduity, was come to attend us to the Haymarket; but, in a few moments, what was our ſurpriſe,

priſe, to ſee our chamber-door flung open, and the two Miſs Branghtons enter the room! They advanced to me with great familiarity, ſaying, "How do you do, couſin?—ſo we've caught you at the glaſs!—well, I'm determined I'll tell my brother of that!"

Miſs Mirvan, who had never before ſeen them, and could not, at firſt, imagine who they were, looked ſo much aſtoniſhed, that I was ready to laugh myſelf, till the eldeſt ſaid, "We're come to take you to the opera, Miſs; papa and my brother are below, and we are to call for your grand-mama as we go along."

"I am very ſorry," anſwered I, "that you ſhould have taken ſo much trouble, as I am engaged already."

"Engaged! Lord, Miſs, never mind that," cried the youngeſt, "this young lady will make your excuſes, I dare ſay; it's only doing as one would be done by, you know."

"Indeed, Ma'am," ſaid Miſs Mirvan, "I ſhall myſelf be very ſorry to be deprived of Miſs Anville's company this evening."

"Well, Miſs, that is not ſo very good-natured in you," ſaid Miſs Branghton, "conſidering we only come to give our couſin pleaſure; it's no good to us; it's all upon

upon her account; for we came, I don't know how much round about to take her up."

"I am extremely obliged to you," said I, "and very sorry you have lost so much time; but I cannot possibly help it, for I engaged myself without knowing you would call."

"Lord, what signifies that?" said Miss Polly, "you're no old maid, and so you need n't be so very formal: besides, I dare say those you are engaged to, a'n't half so near related to you as we are."

"I must beg you not to press me any further, for I assure you it is not in my power to attend you."

"Why we came all out of the city on purpose: besides, your grand-mama expects you;—and pray, what are we to say to her?"

"Tell her, if you please, that I am much concerned,—but that I am pre-engaged."

"And who to?" demanded the abrupt Miss Branghton.

"To Mrs. Mirvan,—and a large party."

"And, pray, what are you all going to do, that it would be such a mighty matter for you to come along with us?"

"We are all going to—to the opera."

"O dear, if that be all, why can't we go all together?"

I was

I was extremely disconcerted at this forward and ignorant behaviour, and yet their rudeness very much lessened my concern at refusing them. Indeed, their dress was such as would have rendered their scheme of accompanying our party impracticable, even if I had desired it; and this, as they did not themselves find out, I was obliged, in terms the least mortifying I could think of, to tell them.

They were very much chagrined, and asked where I should sit?

"In the pit," answered I.

"In the pit!" repeated Miss Branghton, "well, really, I must own I should never have supposed that my gown was not good enough for the pit: but come, Polly, let's go; if Miss does not think us fine enough for her, why to be sure she may chuse."

Surprised at this ignorance, I would have explained to them that the pit at the opera required the same dress as the boxes; but they were so much affronted, they would not hear me, and, in great displeasure, left the room, saying they would not have troubled me, only they thought I should not be so proud with my own relations, and that they had at least as good a right to my company as strangers.

I endeavoured to apologize, and would have sent a long message to Madame Duval;

but they haſtened away without liſtening to me; and I could not follow them down ſtairs, becauſe I was not dreſſed. The laſt words I heard them ſay, were, "Well, her grand-mama will be in a fine paſſion, that's one good thing."

Though I was extremely mad at this viſit, yet I ſo heartily rejoiced at their going, that I would not ſuffer myſelf to think gravely about it.

Soon after, Sir Clement actually came, and we all went down ſtairs. Mrs. Mirvan ordered tea; and we were engaged in a very lively converſation, when the ſervant announced Madame Duval, who inſtantly followed him into the room.

Her face was the colour of ſcarlet, and her eyes ſparkled with fury. She came up to me with a haſty ſtep, ſaying, "So, Miſs, you refuſes to come to me, do you? And pray who are you, to dare to diſobey me?"

I was quite frightened;—I made no anſwer;—I even attempted to riſe, and could not, but ſat ſtill, mute and motionleſs.

Every body, but Miſs Mirvan, ſeemed in the utmoſt aſtoniſhment; and the Captain, riſing and approaching Madame Duval, with a voice of authority, ſaid, "Why how now, Mrs. Turkey Cock, what's put you into this here fluſter?"

"It's nothing to you," anſwered ſhe,

"ſo

" ſo you may as well hold your tongue, for I ſha'n't be called to no account by you, I aſſure you."

" There you're out, Madam Fury," returned he, " for you muſt know I never ſuffer any body to be in a paſſion in my houſe, but myſelf."

" But you *ſhall*," cried ſhe, in a great rage, " for I'll be in as great a paſſion as ever I pleaſe, without aſking your leave; ſo don't give yourſelf no more airs about it. And as for you, Miſs," again advancing to me, " I order you to follow me this moment, or elſe I'll make you repent it all your life." And, with theſe words, ſhe flung out of the room.

I was in ſuch extreme terror, at being addreſſed and threatened in a manner to which I am ſo wholly unuſed, that I almoſt thought I ſhould have fainted.

" Don't be alarmed, my love," cried Mrs. Mirvan, " but ſtay where you are, and I will follow Madame Duval, and try to bring her to reaſon."

Miſs Mirvan took my hand, and moſt kindly endeavoured to raiſe my ſpirits: Sir Clement, too, approached me, with an air ſo intereſted in my diſtreſs, that I could not but feel myſelf obliged to him; and, taking my other hand, ſaid, " For Heaven's ſake, my dear Madam, compoſe yourſelf; ſurely

the violence of such a wretch ought merely to move your contempt; she can have no right, I imagine, to lay her commands upon you, and I only wish that you would allow *me* to speak to her."

"O no! not for the world!—indeed, I believe,—I am afraid—I had better follow her."

"Follow her! Good God, my dear Miss Anville, would you trust yourself with a mad woman? for what else can you call a creature whose passions are so insolent? No, no; send her word at once to leave the house, and tell her you desire that she will never see you again."

"O Sir! you don't know who you talk of!—it would ill become me to send Madame Duval such a message."

"But *why*," cried he, (looking very inquisitive,) "*why* should you scruple to treat her as she deserves?"

I then found that his aim was to discover the nature of her connection with me; but I felt so much ashamed of my near relationship to her, that I could not persuade myself to answer him, and only entreated that he would leave her to Mrs. Mirvan, who just then entered the room.

Before she could speak to me, the Captain called out, "Well, Goody, what have you done with Madame French? is she

cooled a little? 'cauſe if ſhe be n't, I've juſt thought of a moſt excellent device to bring her to."

"My dear Evelina," ſaid Mrs. Mirvan, "I have been vainly endeavouring to appeaſe her; I pleaded your engagement, and promiſed your future attendance: but I am ſorry to ſay, my love, that I fear her rage will end in a total breach (which I think you had better avoid) if ſhe is any further oppoſed."

"Then I will go to her, Madam," cried I, "and, indeed, it is now no matter, for I ſhould not be able to recover my ſpirits ſufficiently to enjoy much pleaſure *any* where this evening."

Sir Clement began a very warm expoſtulation, and entreaty, that I would not go; but I begged him to deſiſt, and told him, very honeſtly, that, if my compliance were not indiſpenſably neceſſary, I ſhould require no perſuaſion to ſtay. He then took my hand, to lead me down ſtairs; but the Captain deſired him to be quiet, ſaying he would 'ſquire me himſelf, "becauſe," he added, (exultingly rubbing his hands) "I have a wipe ready for the old lady, which may ſerve her to *chew* as ſhe goes along."

We found her in the parlour. "O, you're come at laſt, Miſs, are you?—fine airs you give yourſelf, indeed!—*ma foi*, if

you had n't come, you might have ſtayed, I aſſure you, and have been a beggar for your pains."

"Heyday, Madam," cried the Captain, (prancing forward, with a look of great glee,) "what, a'n't you got out of that there paſſion yet? why then, I'll tell you what to do to cool yourſelf; call upon your old friend, *Monſeer* Slippery, who was with you at Ranelagh, and give my ſervice to him, and tell him, if he ſets any ſtore by your health, that I deſire he'll give you ſuch another ſouſe as he did before: he'll know what I mean, and I'll warrant you he'll do't for my ſake."

"Let him, if he dares!" cried Madame Duval; "but I ſha'n't ſtay to anſwer you no more; you are a vulgar fellow,—and ſo, child, let us leave him to himſelf."

"Hark ye, Madam," cried the Captain, "you'd beſt not call names, becauſe, d'ye ſee, if you do, I ſhall make bold to ſhow you the door."

She changed colour, and ſaying, "*Pardi*, I can ſhew it myſelf," hurried out of the room, and I followed her into a hackney-coach. But before we drove off, the Captain, looking out of the parlour window, called out, "D'ye hear, Madam,—don't forget my meſſage to *Monſeer*."

You will believe our ride was not the moſt

moſt agreeable in the world; indeed, it would be difficult to ſay which was leaſt pleaſed, Madame Duval or me, though the reaſons of our diſcontent were ſo different: however, Madame Duval ſoon got the ſtart of me; for we had hardly turned out of Queen-Ann-ſtreet, when a man, running full ſpeed, ſtopt the coach. He came up to the window, and I ſaw he was the Captain's ſervant. He had a broad grin on his face, and panted for breath. Madame Duval demanded his buſineſs; "Madam," anſwered he, "my maſter deſires his compliments to you, and—and—and he ſays he wiſhes it well over with you. He! he! he!—"

Madame Duval inſtantly darted forward, and gave him a violent blow on the face; "Take that back for your anſwer, ſirrah," cried ſhe, "and learn to grin at your betters another time. Coachman, drive on!"

The ſervant was in a violent paſſion, and ſwore terribly; but we were ſoon out of hearing.

The rage of Madame Duval was greater than ever, and ſhe inveighed againſt the Captain with ſuch fury, that I was even apprehenſive ſhe would have returned to his houſe, purpoſely to reproach him, which ſhe repeatedly threatened to do; nor would ſhe, I believe have heſitated a mo-

ment, but that, notwithstanding her violence, he has really made her afraid of him.

When we came to her lodgings, we found all the Branghtons in the passage, impatiently waiting for us, with the door open.

"Only see, here's Miss!" cried the brother.

"Well, I declare I thought as much!" said the younger sister.

"Why, Miss," said Mr. Branghton, "I think you might as well have come with your cousins at once; it's throwing money in the dirt, to pay two coaches for one fare."

"Lord, father," cried the son, "make no words about that; for I'll pay for the coach that Miss had."

"O, I know very well," answered Mr. Branghton, "that you're always more ready to spend than to earn."

I then interfered, and begged that I might myself be allowed to pay the fare, as the expence was incurred upon my account; they all said *no*, and proposed that the same coach should carry us on to the opera.

While this passed, the Miss Branghtons were examining my dress, which, indeed, was very improper for my company; and as I was extremely unwilling to be so conspicuous amongst them, I requested Ma-

dame

dame Duval to borrow a hat or bonnet for me of the people of the house. But she never wears either herself, and thinks them very *English* and barbarous; therefore she insisted that I should go full dressed, as I had prepared myself for the pit, though I made many objections.

We were then all crowded into the same carriage; but when we arrived at the opera-house, I contrived to pay the coachman. They made a great many speeches; but Mr. Branghton's reflection had determined me not to be indebted to him.

If I had not been too much chagrined to laugh, I should have been extremely diverted at their ignorance of whatever belongs to an opera. In the first place, they could not tell at what door we ought to enter, and we wandered about for some time, without knowing which way to turn: they did not chuse to apply to me, though I was the only person of the party who had ever before been at an opera; because they were unwilling to suppose that their *country cousin*, as they were pleased to call me, should be better acquainted with any London public place than themselves. I was very indifferent and careless upon this subject, but not a little uneasy at finding that my dress, so different from that of the company to which

I belonged, attracted general notice and observation.

In a short time, however, we arrived at one of the door-keeper's *bars*. Mr. Branghton demanded for what part of the house they took money? They answered, the pit, and regarded us all with great earnestness. The son then advancing, said, "Sir, if you please, I beg that I may treat Miss."

"We'll settle that another time," answered Mr. Branghton, and put down a guinea.

Two tickets of admission were given to him.

Mr. Branghton, in his turn, now stared at the door-keeper, and demanded what he meant by giving him only two tickets for a guinea?

"Only two, Sir!" said the man, "why don't you know that the tickets are half a guinea each?"

"Half a guinea each!" repeated Mr. Branghton, "why I never heard of such a thing in my life! And pray, Sir, how many will they admit?"

"Just as usual, Sir, one person each."

"But one person for half a guinea!—why I only want to sit in the pit, friend."

"Had not the Ladies better sit in the gallery, Sir; for they'll hardly chuse to go into the pit with their hats on?"

"O, as

"O, as to that," cried Miſs Branghton, "if our hats are too high, we'll take them off when we get in. I ſha'n't mind it, for I did my hair on purpoſe."

Another party then approaching, the door-keeper could no longer attend to Mr. Branghton, who, taking up the guinea, told him it ſhould be long enough before he'd ſee it again, and walked away.

The young ladies, in ſome confuſion, expreſſed their ſurpriſe, that their *papa* ſhould not know the Opera prices, which, for their parts, they had read in the papers a thouſand times.

"The price of ſtocks," ſaid he, "is enough for me to ſee after; and I took it for granted it was the ſame thing here as at the play-houſe."

"I knew well enough what the price was," ſaid the ſon, "but I would not ſpeak, becauſe I thought perhaps they'd take leſs, as we're ſuch a large party."

The ſiſters both laughed very contemptuouſly at this idea, and aſked him if he ever heard of *people's abating* any thing at a public place?

"I don't know whether I have or no," anſwered he, "but I'm ſure if they would, you'd like it ſo much the worſe."

"Very true, Tom," cried Mr. Branghton;

ton; "tell a woman that any thing is reasonable, and she'll be sure to hate it."

"Well," said Miss Polly, "I hope that Aunt and Miss will be of our side, for Papa always takes part with Tom."

"Come, come," cried Madame Duval, "if you stand talking here, we sha'n't get no place at all."

Mr. Branghton then enquired the way to the gallery, and, when we came to the door-keeper, demanded what was to pay.

"The usual price, Sir," said the man.

"Then give me change," cried Mr. Branghton, again putting down his guinea.

"For how many, Sir?"

"Why—let's see,—for six."

"For six, Sir? why you've given me but a guinea."

"*But* a guinea! why how much would you have? I suppose it i'n't half a guinea apiece here too?"

"No, Sir, only five shillings."

Mr. Branghton again took up his unfortunate guinea, and protested he would submit to no such imposition. I then proposed that we should return home, but Madame Duval would not consent, and we were conducted, by a woman who sells books of the Opera, to another gallery-door, where, after some disputing, Mr. Branghton at last paid, and we all went up stairs.

Madame

Madame Duval complained very much of the trouble of going so high, but Mr. Branghton desired her not to hold the place too cheap, "for, whatever you may think," cried he, "I assure you I paid pit price; so don't suppose I come here to save my money."

"Well, to be sure," said Miss Branghton, "there's no judging of a place by the outside, else, I must needs say, there's nothing very extraordinary in the staircase."

But, when we entered the gallery, their amazement and disappointment became general. For a few instants, they looked at one another without speaking, and then they all broke silence at once.

"Lord, Papa," exclaimed Miss Polly, "why you have brought us to the one-shilling gallery!"

"I'll be glad to give you two shillings, though," answered he "to pay. I was never so fooled out of my money before, since the hour of my birth. Either the door-keeper's a knave, or this is the greatest imposition that ever was put upon the public."

"*Ma foi*," cried Madame Duval, "I never sat in such a mean place in all my life; —why it's as high!—we sha'n't see nothing."

"I thought at the time," said Mr.

Branghton, "that three ſhillings was an exorbitant price for a place in the gallery, but as we'd been aſked ſo much more at the other doors, why I paid it without many words; but then, to be ſure, thinks I, it can never be like any other gallery,—we ſhall ſee ſome *crinkum-crankum* or other for our money;—but I find it's as arrant a take-in as ever I met with."

"Why it's as like the twelvepenny gallery at Drury-lane," cried the ſon, "as two peas are to one another. I never knew father ſo bit before."

"Lord," ſaid Miſs Branghton, "I thought it would have been quite a fine place,—all over I don't know what,—and done quite in taſte."

In this manner they continued to expreſs their diſſatisfaction till the curtain drew up; after which, their obſervations were very curious. They made no allowance for the cuſtoms, or even for the language of another country, but formed all their remarks upon compariſons with the Engliſh theatre.

Notwithſtanding my vexation at having been forced into a party ſo very diſagreeable, and that, too, from one ſo much—ſo very much the contrary—yet, would they have ſuffered me to liſten, I ſhould have forgotten every thing unpleaſant, and felt nothing but delight in hearing the ſweet

voice of Signor Millico, the first singer; but they tormented me with continual talking.

"What a jabbering they make!" cried Mr. Branghton; "there's no knowing a word they say. Pray what's the reason they can't as well sing in English?—but I suppose the fine folks would not like it, if they could understand it."

"How unnatural their action is!" said the son; "why now who ever saw an Englishman put himself in such out-of-the-way postures?"

"For my part," said Miss Polly, "I think it's very pretty, only I don't know what it means."

"Lord, what does that signify?" cried her sister; "may n't one like a thing without being so very particular?—You may see that Miss likes it, and I don't suppose she knows more of the matter than we do."

A gentleman, soon after, was so obliging as to make room in the front row for Miss Branghton and me. We had no sooner seated ourselves, than Miss Branghton exclaimed, "Good gracious! only see!—why, Polly, all the people in the pit are without hats, dressed like any thing!"

"Lord, so they are," cried Miss Polly, "well, I never saw the like!—it's worth coming

coming to the Opera if one saw nothing else."

I was then able to distinguish the happy party I had left; and I saw that Lord Orville had seated himself next to Mrs. Mirvan. Sir Clement had his eyes perpetually cast towards the five-shilling gallery, where I suppose he concluded that we were seated; however, before the Opera was over, I have reason to believe that he had discovered me, high and distant as I was from him. Probably he distinguished me by my head-dress.

At the end of the first act, as the green curtain dropped, to prepare for the dance, they imagined that the Opera was done, and Mr. Branghton expressed great indignation that he had been *tricked* out of his money with so little trouble. "Now if any Englishman was to do such an impudent thing as this," said he, "why he'd be pelted;—but here, one of these outlandish gentry may do just what he pleases, and come on, and squeak out a song or two, and then pocket your money without further ceremony."

However, so determined he was to be dissatisfied, that before the conclusion of the third act, he found still more fault with the Opera for being too long, and wondered whether they thought their singing good enough to serve us for supper.

During

During the symphony of a song of Signor Millico's, in the second act, young Mr. Branghton said, "It's my belief that that fellow's going to sing another song!—why there's nothing but singing!—I wonder when they'll speak."

This song, which was slow and pathetic, caught all my attention, and I lean'd my head forward to avoid hearing their observations, that I might listen without interruption; but, upon turning round, when the song was over, I found that I was the object of general diversion to the whole party; for the Miss Branghtons were tittering, and the two gentlemen making signs and faces at me, implying their contempt of my affectation.

This discovery determined me to appear as inattentive as themselves; but I was very much provoked at being thus prevented enjoying the only pleasure, which, in such a party, was within my power.

"So, Miss," said Mr. Branghton, "you're quite in the fashion, I see;—so you like Operas? well, I'm not so polite; I can't like nonsense, let it be never so much the taste,"

"But pray, Miss," said the son, "what makes that fellow look so doleful while he's singing?"

"Probably

"Probably becauſe the character he performs is in diſtreſs."

"Why then I think he might as well let alone ſinging till he's in better cue: it's out of all nature for a man to be piping when he's in diſtreſs. For my part, I never ſing but when I'm merry; yet I love a ſong as well as moſt people."

When the curtain dropt, they all rejoiced.

"How do *you* like it?—and how do *you* like it?" paſſed from one to another with looks of the utmoſt contempt. "As for me," ſaid Mr. Branghton, "they've caught me once, but if ever they do again, I'll give 'em leave to ſing me to Bedlam for my pains: for ſuch a heap of ſtuff never did I hear; there is n't one ounce of ſenſe in the whole Opera, nothing but one continued ſqueaking and ſqualling from beginning to end."

"If I had been in the pit," ſaid Madame Duval, "I ſhould have liked it vaſtly, for muſic is my paſſion; but ſitting in ſuch a place as this, is quite unbearable."

Miſs Branghton, looking at me, declared, that ſhe was not *genteel* enough to admire it.

Miſs Polly confeſſed, that, if they would

but

but ſing *Engliſh* ſhe ſhould like it *very well.*

The brother wiſhed he could raiſe a riot in the houſe, becauſe then he might get his money again.

And, finally, they all agreed, that it was *monſtrous dear.*

During the laſt dance, I perceived, ſtanding near the gallery-door, Sir Clement Willoughby. I was extremely vexed, and would have given the world to have avoided being ſeen by him: my chief objection was, from the apprehenſion that he wou'd hear Miſs Branghton call me *couſin.*—I fear you will think this London journey has made me grow very proud, but indeed this family is ſo low-bred and vulgar, that I ſhould be equally aſhamed of ſuch a connexion in the country, or any where. And really I had already been ſo much chagrined that Sir Clement had been a witneſs of Madame Duval's power over me, that I could not bear to be expoſed to any further mortification.

As the ſeats cleared, by parties going away, Sir Clement approached nearer to us; the Miſs Branghtons obſerved with ſurpriſe, what a fine gentleman was come into the gallery, and they gave me great reaſon to expect, that they would endeavour to attract his notice, by familiarity with me, whenever

whenever he ſhould join us; and ſo, I formed a ſort of plan, to prevent any converſation. I am afraid you will think it wrong; and ſo I do myſelf now,—but, at the time, I only conſidered how I might avoid immediate humiliation.

As ſoon as he was within two ſeats of us; he ſpoke to me, "I am very happy, Miſs Anville, to have found you, for the Ladies below have each an humble attendant, and therefore I am come to offer my ſervices here."

"Why then," cried I, (not without heſitating) "if you pleaſe,—I will join them."

"Will you allow me the honour of conducting you?" cried he eagerly; and, inſtantly taking my hand, he would have marched away with me: but I turned to Madame Duval, and ſaid, "As our party is ſo large, Madam, if you will give me leave, I will go down to Mrs. Mirvan, that I may not croud you in the coach."

And then, without waiting for an anſwer, I ſuffered Sir Clement to hand me out of the gallery.

Madame Duval, I doubt not, will be very angry, and ſo I am with myſelf, now, and therefore I cannot be ſurpriſed: but Mr. Branghton, I am ſure, will eaſily comfort himſelf, in having eſcaped the additional coach expence of carrying me to

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Queen-Ann-ſtreet: as to his daughters, they had no time to ſpeak, but I ſaw they were in utter amazement.

My intention was to join Mrs. Mirvan, and accompany her home. Sir Clement was in high ſpirits and good humour; and, all the way we went, I was fool enough to rejoice in ſecret at the ſucceſs of my plan; nor was it till I got down ſtairs, and amidſt the ſervants, that any difficulty occurred to me of meeting with my friends.

I then aſked Sir Clement how I ſhould contrive to acquaint Mrs. Mirvan that I had left Madame Duval?

"I fear it will be almoſt impoſſible to find her," anſwered he; "but you can have no objection to permitting me to ſee you ſafe home."

He then deſired his ſervant, who was waiting, to order his chariot to draw up.

This quite ſtartled me; I turned to him haſtily, and ſaid that I could not think of going away without Mrs. Mirvan.

"But how can we meet with her?" cried he; "you will not chuſe to go into the pit yourſelf; I cannot ſend a ſervant there; and it is impoſſible for *me* to go and leave you alone."

The truth of this was indiſputable, and totally ſilenced me. Yet, as ſoon as I could recollect myſelf, I determined not to go in his

his chariot, and told him I believed I had beſt return to my party up ſtairs.

He would not hear of this; and earneſtly entreated me not to withdraw the truſt I had repoſed in him.

While he was ſpeaking, I ſaw Lord Orville, with ſeveral ladies and gentlemen, coming from the pit paſſage: unfortunately, he ſaw me too, and, leaving his company, advanced inſtantly towards me, and, with an air and voice of ſurpriſe, ſaid, "Good God, do I ſee Miſs Anville!"

I now moſt ſeverely felt the folly of my plan, and the awkwardneſs of my ſituation; however, I haſtened to tell him, though in a heſitating manner, that I was waiting for Mrs. Mirvan: but what was my diſappointment, when he acquainted me that ſhe was already gone home!

I was inexpreſſibly diſtreſſed; to ſuffer Lord Orville to think me ſatisfied with the ſingle protection of Sir Clement Willoughby, I could not bear; yet I was more than ever averſe to returning to a party which I dreaded his ſeeing: I ſtood ſome moments in ſuſpenſe, and could not help exclaiming, "Good Heaven, what can I do!"

"Why, my dear Madam," cried Sir Clement, "ſhould you be thus uneaſy?—you will reach Queen-Ann-ſtreet almoſt as ſoon as

as Mrs. Mirvan, and I am sure you cannot doubt being as safe."

I made no answer, and Lord Orville then said, "My coach is here; and my servants are ready to take any commands Miss Anville will honour me with for them. I shall myself go home in a chair, and therefore—"

How grateful did I feel for a proposal so considerate, and made with so much delicacy! I should gladly have accepted it, had I been permitted, but Sir Clement would not let him even finish his speech; he interrupted him with evident displeasure, and said, "My Lord, my own chariot is now at the door."

And just then the servant came, and told him the carriage was ready. He begged to have the honour of conducting me to it, and would have taken my hand, but I drew it back, saying, "I can't—I can't indeed! pray go by yourself—and as to me, let me have a chair."

"Impossible!" (cried he with vehemence) "I cannot think of trusting you with strange chairmen,—I cannot answer it to Mrs. Mirvan;—come, dear Madam, we shall be home in five minutes."

Again I stood suspended. With what joy would I then have compromised with my pride, to have been once more with Madame

Madame Duval and the Branghtons, provided I had not met with Lord Orville! However, I flatter myself that he not only saw, but pitied my embarrassment, for he said, in a tone of voice unusually softened, "To offer my services in the presence of Sir Clement Willoughby would be superfluous; but I hope I need not assure Miss Anville, how happy it would make me to be of the least use to her."

I courtsied my thanks. Sir Clement, with great earnestness, pressed me to go; and while I was thus uneasily deliberating what to do, the dance, I suppose, finished, for the people crowded down stairs. Had Lord Orville then repeated his offer, I would have accepted it, notwithstanding Sir Clement's repugnance; but I fancy he thought it would be impertinent. In a very few minutes I heard Madame Duval's voice, as she descended from the gallery; "Well," cried I, hastily, "if I must go—" I stopt, but Sir Clement immediately handed me into his chariot, called out "Queen-Ann-street," and then jumped in himself. Lord Orville, with a bow and a half smile, wished me good night.

My concern was so great, at being seen and left by Lord Orville in so strange a situation, that I should have been best pleased to have remained wholly silent dur-

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ing our ride home: but Sir Clement took care to prevent that.

He began by making many complaints of my unwillingneſs to truſt myſelf with him, and begged to know what could be the reaſon? This queſtion ſo much embarraſſed me, that I could not tell what to anſwer, but only ſaid, that I was ſorry to have taken up ſo much of his time.

"O Miſs Anville," (cried he, taking my hand) "if you knew with what tranſport I would dedicate to you not only the preſent but all the future time allotted to me, you would not injure me by making ſuch an apology."

I could not think of a word to ſay to this, nor to a great many other equally fine ſpeeches with which he ran on, though I would fain have withdrawn my hand, and made almoſt continual attempts; but in vain, for he actually graſped it between both his, without any regard to my reſiſtance.

Soon after, he ſaid that he believed the coachman was going the wrong way, and he called to his ſervant, and gave him directions. Then again addreſſing himſelf to me, "How often, how aſſiduouſly have I ſought an opportunity of ſpeaking to you, without the preſence of that brute, Captain Mirvan! Fortune has now kindly favoured

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me with one, and permit me," (again ſeizing my hand) "permit me to uſe it, in telling you that I adore you."

I was quite thunderſtruck at this abrupt and unexpected declaration. For ſome moments I was ſilent; but, when I recovered from my ſurpriſe, I ſaid, "Indeed, Sir, if you were determined to make me repent leaving my own party ſo fooliſhly, you have very well ſucceeded."

"My deareſt life," cried he, "is it poſſible you can be ſo cruel? Can your nature and your countenance be ſo totally oppoſite? Can the ſweet bloom upon thoſe charming cheeks, which appears as much the reſult of good humour as of beauty—"

"O, Sir," cried I, interrupting him, "this is very fine; but I had hoped we had had enough of this ſort of converſation at the Ridotto, and I did not expect you would ſo ſoon reſume it."

"What I then ſaid, my ſweet reproacher, was the effect of a miſtaken, a prophane idea, that your underſtanding held no competition with your beauty; but now, now that I find you equally incomparable in both, all words, all powers of ſpeech, are too feeble to expreſs the admiration I feel of your excellencies."

"Indeed," cried I, "if your thoughts had any connexion with your language, you would

would never ſuppoſe that I could give credit to praiſe ſo very much above my deſert."

This ſpeech, which I made very gravely, occaſioned ſtill ſtronger proteſtations, which he continued to pour forth, and I continued to diſclaim, till I began to wonder that we were not in Queen-Ann-ſtreet, and begged he would deſire the coachman to drive faſter.

"And does this little moment," cried he, "which is the firſt of happineſs I have ever known, does it already appear ſo very long to you?"

"I am afraid the man has miſtaken the way," anſwered I, "or elſe we ſhould ere now have been at our journey's end. I muſt beg you will ſpeak to him."

"And can you think me ſo much my own enemy?—if my good genius has inſpired the man with a deſire of prolonging my happineſs, can you expect that I ſhould counter-act its indulgence?"

I now began to apprehend that he had himſelf ordered the man to go a wrong way, and I was ſo much alarmed at the idea, that, the very inſtant it occurred to me, I let down the glaſs, and made a ſudden effort to open the chariot-door myſelf, with a view of jumping into the ſtreet; but he caught hold of me, exclaiming, "For Heaven's ſake, what is the matter?"

"I—I don't know," cried I, (quite out

of breath) "but I am ſure the man goes wrong, and, if you will not ſpeak to him, I am determined I will get out myſelf."

"You amaze me," anſwered he, (ſtill holding me) "I cannot imagine what you apprehend. Surely you can have no doubts of my honour?"

He drew me towards him as he ſpoke. I was frightened dreadfully, and could hardly ſay, "No, Sir, no,—none at all,—only Mrs. Mirvan,—I think ſhe will be uneaſy."

"Whence this alarm, my deareſt angel? —What can you fear?—my life is at your devotion, and can you, then, doubt my protection?"

And ſo ſaying he paſſionately kiſſed my hand.

Never, in my whole life, have I been ſo terrified. I broke forcibly from him, and, putting my head out of the window, called aloud to the man to ſtop. Where we then were I know not, but I ſaw not a human being, or I ſhould have called for help.

Sir Clement, with great earneſtneſs, endeavoured to appeaſe and compoſe me; "If you do not intend to murder me," cried I, "for mercy's, for pity's ſake, let me get out!"

"Compoſe your ſpirits, my deareſt life," cried he, "and I will do every thing you

would have me." And then he called to the man himſelf, and bid him make haſte to Queen-Ann-ſtreet. "This ſtupid fellow," continued he, "has certainly miſtaken my orders; but I hope you are now fully ſatisfied."

I made no anſwer, but kept my head at the window, watching which way he drove, but without any comfort to myſelf, as I was quite unacquainted with either the right or the wrong.

Sir Clement now poured forth abundant proteſtations of honour, and aſſurances of reſpect, entreating my pardon for having offended me, and beſeeching my good opinion: but I was quite ſilent, having too much apprehenſion to make reproaches, and too much anger to ſpeak without.

In this manner we went through ſeveral ſtreets, till at laſt, to my great terror, he ſuddenly ordered the man to ſtop, and ſaid, "Miſs Anville, we are now within twenty yards of your houſe; but I cannot bear to part with you, till you generouſly forgive me for the offence you have taken, and promiſe not to make it known to the Mirvans."

I heſitated between fear and indignation.

"Your reluctance to ſpeak, redoubles my contrition for having diſpleaſed you, ſince it ſhews the reliance I might have on

a promise which you will not give without consideration."

"I am very, very much distressed," cried I; "you ask a promise which you must be sensible I ought not to grant, and yet dare not refuse."

"Drive on!" cried he to the coachman; —"Miss Anville, I will not compel you; I will exact no promise, but trust wholly to your generosity."

This rather softened me; which advantage he no sooner perceived, than he determined to avail himself of, for he flung himself on his knees, and pleaded with so much submission, that I was really obliged to forgive him, because his humiliation made me quite ashamed: and, after that, he would not let me rest till I gave him my word that I would not complain of him to Mrs. Mirvan.

My own folly and pride, which had put me in his power, were pleas which I could not but attend to in his favour. However, I shall take very particular care never to be again alone with him.

When, at last, we arrived at our house, I was so overjoyed, that I should certainly have pardoned him then, if I had not before. As he handed me up stairs, he scolded his servant aloud, and very angrily, for having gone so much out of the way. Miss

Mirvan

Mirvan ran out to meet me,—and who ſhould I ſee behind her, but—Lord Orville!

All my joy now vaniſhed, and gave place to ſhame and confuſion; for I could not endure that he ſhould know how long a time Sir Clement and I had been together, ſince I was not at liberty to aſſign any reaſon for it.

They all expreſſed great ſatisfaction at ſeeing me, and ſaid they had been extremely uneaſy and ſurpriſed that I was ſo long coming home, as they had heard from Lord Orville that I was not with Madame Duval. Sir Clement, in an affected paſſion, ſaid that his booby of a ſervant had miſunderſtood his orders, and was driving us to the upper end of Piccadilly. For my part, I only coloured; for though I would not forfeit my word, I yet diſdained to confirm a tale in which I had myſelf no belief.

Lord Orville, with great politeneſs, congratulated me, that the troubles of the evening had ſo happily ended, and ſaid, that he had found it impoſſible to return home, before he enquired after my ſafety.

In a very ſhort time he took leave, and Sir Clement followed him. As ſoon as they were gone, Mrs. Mirvan, though with great ſoftneſs, blamed me for having quit-

ted Madame Duval. I assured her, and with truth, that for the future I would be more prudent.

The adventures of the evening so much disconcerted me, that I could not sleep all night. I am under the most cruel apprehensions, lest Lord Orville should suppose my being on the gallery-stairs with Sir Clement was a concerted scheme, and even that our continuing so long together in his chariot, was with my approbation, since I did not say a word on the subject, nor express any dissatisfaction at the coachman's pretended blunder.

Yet his coming hither to wait our arrival, though it seems to imply some doubt, shews also some anxiety. Indeed Miss Mirvan says, that he appeared *extremely* anxious, nay uneasy and impatient for my return. If I did not fear to flatter myself, I should think it not impossible but that he had a suspicion of Sir Clement's design, and was therefore concerned for my safety.

What a long letter is this! however, I shall not write many more from London, for the Captain said this morning, that he would leave town on Tuesday next. Madame Duval will dine here to-day, and then she is to be told his intention.

I am very much amazed that she accepted Mrs. Mirvan's invitation, as she was in such

wrath

wrath yesterday. I fear that to day I shall myself be the principal object of her displeasure; but I must submit patiently, for I cannot defend myself.

Adieu, my dearest Sir. Should this letter be productive of any uneasiness to you, more than ever shall I repent the heedless imprudence which it recites.

LETTER XXII.

Evelina in continuation.

Monday Morning, April 18.

MRS. Mirvan has just communicated to me an anecdote concerning Lord Orville, which has much surprised, half pleased, and half pained me.

While they were sitting together during the opera, he told her that he had been greatly concerned at the impertinence which the young lady under her protection had suffered from Mr. Lovel; but that he had the pleasure of assuring her, she had no future disturbance to apprehend from him.

Mrs. Mirvan, with great eagerness, begged he would explain himself, and said she

hoped he had not thought so insignificant an affair worthy his serious attention.

"There is nothing," answered he, "which requires more immediate notice than impertinence, for it ever encroaches when it is tolerated." He then added, that he believed he ought to apologize for the liberty he had taken of interfering, but that, as he regarded himself in the light of a *party concerned*, from having had the honour of dancing with Miss Anville, he could not possibly reconcile to himself a patient neutrality.

He then proceeded to tell her, that he had waited upon Mr. Lovel the morning after the play; that the visit had proved an amicable one, but the particulars were neither entertaining nor necessary; he only assured her, Miss Anville might be perfectly easy, since Mr. Lovel had engaged his honour never more to mention, or even to hint at what had passed at Mrs. Stanley's assembly.

Mrs. Mirvan expressed her satisfaction at this conclusion, and thanked him for his polite attention to her young friend.

"It would be needless," said he, "to request that this affair may never transpire, since Mrs. Mirvan cannot but see the necessity of keeping it inviolably secret; but I thought

thought it incumbent upon me, as the young lady is under your protection, to assure both you and her of Mr. Lovel's future respect."

Had I known of this visit previous to Lord Orville's making it, what dreadful uneasiness would it have cost me! Yet that he should so much interest himself in securing me from offence, gives me, I must own, an internal pleasure, greater than I can express; for I feared he had too contemptuous an opinion of me, to take any trouble upon my account. Though, after all, this interference might rather be to satisfy his own delicacy, than from thinking well of me.

But how cool, how quiet is true courage! Who, from seeing Lord Orville at the play, would have imagined his resentment would have hazarded his life? yet his displeasure was evident, though his real bravery and his politeness equally guarded him from entering into any discussion in our presence.

Madame Duval, as I expected, was most terribly angry yesterday; she scolded me for I believe two hours, on account of having left her, and protested she had been so much surprised at my going, without giving her time to answer, that she hardly knew whether she was awake or asleep. But she

assured me, that if ever I did so again, she would never more take me into public. And she expressed an equal degree of displeasure against Sir Clement, because he had not even spoken to her, and because he was always of the Captain's side in an argument. The Captain, as bound in honour, warmly defended him, and then followed a dispute in the usual style.

After dinner, Mrs. Mirvan introduced the subject of our leaving London. Madame Duval said she should stay a month or two longer. The Captain told her she was welcome, but that he and his family should go into the country on Tuesday morning.

A most disagreeable scene followed; Madame Duval insisted upon keeping me with her; but Mrs. Mirvan said, that as I was actually engaged on a visit to Lady Howard, who had only consented to my leaving her for a few days, she could not think of returning without me.

Perhaps if the Captain had not interfered, the good-breeding and mildness of Mrs. Mirvan might have had some effect upon Madame Duval; but he passes no opportunity of provoking her, and therefore made so many gross and rude speeches, all of which she retorted, that, in conclusion, she vowed she would sooner go to law, in

right

right of her relationship, than that I should be taken away from her.

I heard this account from Mrs. Mirvan, who was so kindly considerate as to give me a pretence for quitting the room, as soon as this dispute began, lest Madame Duval should refer to me, and insist on my obedience.

The final result of the conversation was, that, to soften matters for the present, Madame Duval should make one in the party for Howard Grove, whither we are positively to go next Wednesday. And though we are none of us satisfied with this plan, we know not how to form a better.

Mrs. Mirvan is now writing to Lady Howard, to excuse bringing this unexpected guest, and to prevent the disagreeable surprise, which must, otherwise, attend her reception. This dear lady seems eternally studying my happiness and advantage.

To-night we go to the Pantheon, which is the last diversion we shall partake of in London, for to-morrow———

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This moment, my dearest Sir, I have received your kind letter.

If you thought us too dissipated the first week, I almost fear to know what you will think of us this second;—however, the

Pantheon this evening will probably be the laſt public place which I ſhall ever ſee.

The aſſurance of your ſupport and protection in regard to Madame Duval, though what I never doubted, excites my utmoſt gratitude: how, indeed, cheriſhed under your roof, the happy object of your conſtant indulgence, how could I have borne to become the ſlave of her tyrannical humours?—pardon me that I ſpeak ſo hardly of her; but, whenever the idea of paſſing my days with her occurs to me, the compariſon which naturally follows, takes from me all that forbearance, which, I believe, I owe her.

You are already diſpleaſed with Sir Clement: to be ſure, then, his behaviour after the Opera will not make his peace with you. Indeed, the more I reflect upon it, the more angry I am. I was entirely in his power, and it was cruel in him to cauſe me ſo much terror.

O my deareſt Sir, were I but worthy the prayers and the wiſhes you offer for me, the utmoſt ambition of my heart would be fully ſatisfied! but I greatly fear you will find me, now that I am out of the reach of your aſſiſting prudence, more weak and imperfect than you could have expected.

I have not now time to write another word,

word, for I must immediately hasten to dress for the evening.

LETTER XXIII.

Evelina in continuation.

Queen-Ann-street, Tuesday, April 19.

THERE is something to me half melancholy in writing an account of our last adventures in London; however, as this day is merely appropriated to packing, and preparations for our journey, and as I shall shortly have no more adventures to write, I think I may as well complete my town-journal at once. And, when you have it all together, I hope, my dear Sir, you will send me your observations and thoughts upon it to Howard Grove.

About eight o'clock we went to the Pantheon. I was extremely struck with the beauty of the building, which greatly surpassed whatever I could have expected or imagined. Yet, it has more the appearance of a chapel, than of a place of diversion; and, though I was quite charmed with the magnificence of the room, I felt that I could not be as gay and thoughtless there as at Ranelagh, for there is something in it which

which rather inſpires awe and ſolemnity, than mirth and pleaſure. However, perhaps it may only have this effect upon ſuch a novice as myſelf.

I ſhould have ſaid, that our party conſiſted only of Captain, Mrs. and Miſs Mirvan, as Madame Duval ſpent the day in the city:—which I own I could not lament.

There was a great deal of company; but the firſt perſon we ſaw was Sir Clement Willoughby. He addreſſed us with his uſual eaſe, and joined us for the whole evening. I felt myſelf very uneaſy in his preſence; for I could not look at him, nor hear him ſpeak, without recollecting the chariot adventure; but to my great amazement, I obſerved that he looked at *me* without the leaſt apparent diſcompoſure, though certainly he ought not to think of his behaviour without bluſhing. I really wiſh I had not forgiven him, and then he could not have ventured to ſpeak to me any more.

There was an exceeding good concert, but too much talking to hear it well. Indeed I am quite aſtoniſhed to find how little muſic is attended to in ſilence; for though every body ſeems to admire, hardly any body liſtens.

We did not ſee Lord Orville, till we went into the tea-room, which is large, low,

low, and under ground, and ſerves merely as a foil to the apartments above; he then ſat next to us; he ſeemed to belong to a large party, chiefly of ladies; but, among the gentlemen attending them, I perceived Mr. Lovel.

I was extremely irreſolute whether or not I ought to make any acknowledgments to Lord Orville for his generous conduct in ſecuring me from the future impertinence of that man; and I thought, that as he had ſeemed to allow Mrs Mirvan to acquaint me, though no one elſe, of the meaſures which he had taken, he might, perhaps, ſuppoſe me ungrateful if ſilent: however, I might have ſpared myſelf the trouble of deliberating, as I never once had the ſhadow of an opportunity of ſpeaking unheard by Sir Clement. On the contrary, he was ſo exceedingly officious and forward, that I could not ſay a word to any body, but inſtantly he bent his head forward, with an air of profound attention, as if I had addreſſed myſelf wholly to him: and yet, I never once looked at him, and would not have ſpoken to him on any account.

Indeed, Mrs. Mirvan, herſelf, though unacquainted with the behaviour of Sir Clement after the opera, ſays it is not right for a young woman to be ſeen ſo frequently in public with the ſame gentleman; and, if our

our ſtay in town was to be lengthened, ſhe would endeavour to repreſent to the Captain the impropriety of allowing his conſtant attendance; for Sir Clement with all his *eaſineſs*, could not be ſo eternally of our parties, if the Captain was leſs fond of his company.

At the ſame table with Lord Orville, ſat a gentleman,—I call him ſo only becauſe he *was* at the ſame table,—who, almoſt from the moment I was ſeated, fixed his eyes ſtedfaſtly on my face, and never once removed them to any other object during tea-time, notwithſtanding my diſlike of his ſtaring, muſt, I am ſure, have been very evident. I was quite ſurpriſed, that a man whoſe boldneſs was ſo offenſive, could have gained admiſſion into a party of which Lord Orville made one; for I naturally concluded him to be ſome low-bred, and uneducated man; and I thought my idea was indubitably confirmed, when I heard him ſay to Sir Clement Willoughby, in an *audible whiſper*,—which is a mode of ſpeech very diſtreſſing and diſagreeable to by-ſtanders,—"For Heaven's ſake, Willoughby, who is that lovely creature?"

But what was my amazement, when, liſtening attentively for the anſwer, though my head was turned another way, I heard Sir Clement ſay, "I am ſorry I cannot in-

form

form your Lordſhip, but I am ignorant myſelf."

Lordſhip! — how extraordinary! that a *nobleman*, accuſtomed, in all probability, to the firſt rank of company in the kingdom, from his earlieſt infancy, can poſſibly be deficient in *good manners*, however faulty in morals and principles! Even Sir Clement Willoughby appeared modeſt in compariſon with this perſon.

During tea, a converſation was commenced upon the times, faſhions, and public places, in which the company of both tables joined. It began by Sir Clement's enquiring of Miſs Mirvan, and of me, if the Pantheon had anſwered our expectations.

We both readily agreed that it had greatly exceeded them.

"Ay, to be ſure," ſaid the Captain, "why you don't ſuppoſe they'd confeſs they did n't like it, do you? Whatever's the faſhion, they muſt like of courſe;—or elſe I'd be bound for it they'd own, that there never was ſuch a dull place as this here invented."

"And has, then, this building," ſaid Lord Orville, "no merit that may ſerve to leſſen your cenſure? Will not your eye, Sir, ſpeak ſomething in its favour?"

"Eye!" cried the Lord, (I don't know his name,) "and is there any eye here, that can

can find pleaſure in looking at dead walls or ſtatues, when ſuch heavenly living objects as I now ſee demand all their admiration?"

"O, certainly," ſaid Lord Orville, "the lifeleſs ſymmetry of architecture, however beautiful the deſign and proportion, no man would be ſo mad as to put in competition with the animated charms of nature: but when, as to-night, the eye may be regaled at the ſame time, and in one view, with all the excellence of art, and all the perfection of nature, I cannot think that either ſuffer by being ſeen together."

"I grant, my Lord," ſaid Sir Clement, "that the cool eye of unimpaſſioned philoſophy may view both with equal attention, and equal ſafety; but, where the heart is not ſo well guarded, it is apt to interfere, and render, even to the eye, all objects but one inſipid and unintereſting."

"Aye, aye," cried the Captain, "you may talk what you will of your eye here, and your eye there, and, for the matter of that, to be ſure you have two,—but we all know they both ſquint one way."

"Far be it from me," ſaid Lord Orville, "to diſpute the *magnetic* power of beauty, which irreſiſtibly draws and attracts whatever has ſoul and ſympathy: and I am happy to acknowledge, that though we have now

no

no *gods* to occupy a manſion profeſſedly built for them, yet we have ſecured their *better halves*, for we have *goddeſſes* to whom we all moſt willingly bow down." And then, with a very droll air, he made a profound reverence to the ladies.

"They'd need be goddeſſes with a vengeance," ſaid the Captain, "for they're mortal dear to look at. Howſomever, I ſhould be glad to know what you can ſee in e'er a face among them that's worth half a guinea for a ſight."

"Half a guinea!" exclaimed that ſame Lord, "I would give half I am worth, for a ſight of only *one*, provided I make my own choice. And, prithee, how can money be better employed than in the ſervice of fine women."

"If the ladies of his own party can pardon the Captain's ſpeech," ſaid Sir Clement, "I think he has a fair claim to the forgiveneſs of all."

"Then you depend very much, as I doubt not but you may," ſaid Lord Orville, "upon the general ſweetneſs of the ſex;—but, as to the ladies of the Captain's party, they may eaſily pardon, for they cannot be hurt."

"But they muſt have a deviliſh good conceit of themſelves, though," ſaid the Captain, "to believe all that. Howſom-

ever,

ever, whether or no, I ſhould be glad to be told, by ſome of you, who ſeem to be knowing in them things, what kind of diverſion can be found in ſuch a place as this here, for one who has had, long ago, his full of face-hunting?"

Every body laughed, but nobody ſpoke.

"Why, look you there, now," continued the Captain, "you're all at a dead ſtand!—not a man among you can anſwer that there queſtion. Why, then, I muſt make bold to conclude, that you all come here for no manner of purpoſe but to ſtare at one another's pretty faces;—though, for the matter of that, half of 'em are plaguy ugly,—and, as to t'other half,—I believe it's none of God's manufactory."

"What the ladies may come hither for, Sir," ſaid Mr. Lovel, (ſtroking his ruffles, and looking down,) "it would ill become *us* to determine; but as to we men, doubtleſs we can have no other view, than to admire them."

"If I be n't miſtaken," cried the Captain (looking earneſtly in his face,) "you are that ſame perſon we ſaw at Love for Love t'other night; be n't you?

Mr. Lovel bowed.

"Why, then, Gentlemen," continued he, with a loud laugh, "I muſt tell you a moſt excellent good joke;—when all was over,

as

as ſure as you're alive, he aſked what the play was! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Sir," ſaid Mr. Lovel, colouring, "if you were as much uſed to a town life as I am,—which, I preſume, is not preciſely the caſe,—I fancy you would not find ſo much diverſion from a circumſtance ſo common."

"Common! what, is it common?" repeated the Captain; "why then, 'fore George, ſuch chaps are more fit to be ſent to ſchool, and well diſciplined with a cat o' nine tails, than to poke their heads into a play-houſe. Why, a play is the only thing left, now-a-days, that has a grain of ſenſe in it; for as to all the reſt of your public places, d'ye ſee, if they were all put together, I would n't give *that* for 'em!" ſnapping his fingers. "And now we're talking of them ſort of things, there's your operas,—I ſhould like to know, now, what any of you can find to ſay for them."

Lord Orville, who was moſt able to have anſwered, ſeemed by no means to think the Captain worthy an argument, upon a ſubject concerning which he had neither knowledge nor feeling: but, turning to us, he ſaid, "The ladies are ſilent, and we ſeem to have engroſſed the converſation to ourſelves, in which we are much more our own enemies than theirs. But," addreſſing himſelf to Miſs Mirvan and me, "I am moſt

moſt deſirous to hear the opinions of theſe young ladies, to whom all public places muſt, as yet, be new."

We both, and with eagerneſs, declared that we had received as much, if not more pleaſure, at the opera than any where: but we had better have been ſilent; for the Captain, quite diſpleaſed, ſaid, "What ſignifies aſking them girls? Do you think they know their own minds yet? Aſk 'em after any thing that's called diverſion, and you're ſure they'll ſay it's vaſtly fine;—they are a ſet of parrots, and ſpeak by rote, for they all ſay the ſame thing: but aſk 'em how they like making puddings and pies, and I'll warrant you'll poſe 'em. As to them operas, I deſire I may hear no more of their liking ſuch nonſenſe; and for you, Moll," to his daughter, "I charge you, as you value my favour, that you'll never again be ſo impertinent as to have a taſte of your own before my face. There are fools enough in the world, without your adding to their number. I'll have no daughter of mine affect them ſort of megrims. It is a ſhame they a'n't put down; and if I'd my will, there's not a magiſtrate in this town, but ſhould be knocked of the head for ſuffering them. If you've a mind to praiſe any thing, why you may praiſe a play, and welcome, for I like it myſelf."

This

This reproof effectually silenced us both for the rest of the evening. Nay, indeed, for some minutes it seemed to silence every body else; till Mr. Lovel, not willing to lose an opportunity of returning the Captain's sarcasm, said, "Why, really Sir, it is but natural to be most pleased with what is most familiar, and, I think, of all our diversions, there is not one so much in common between us and the country, as a play. Not a village but has its barns and comedians; and as for the stage business, why it may be pretty equally done any where; and even in regard to *us*, and the *canaille*, confined as we all are within the semi-circle of a theatre, there is no place where the distinction is less obvious."

While the Captain seemed considering for Mr. Lovel's meaning, Lord Orville, probably with a view to prevent his finding it, changed the subject to Cox's Museum, and asked what he thought of it?

"Think!—" said he, "why I think as how it i'n't worth thinking about. I like no such *jem cracks*. It is only fit, in my mind, for monkeys,—though, for aught I know, they too might turn up their noses at it."

"May we ask your Lordship's own opinion?" said Mrs. Mirvan.

"The mechanism," answered he, "is wonderfully

wonderfully ingenious: I am ſorry it is turned to no better account; but its purport is ſo frivolous, ſo very remote from all aim at inſtruction or utility, that the ſight of ſo fine a ſhew, only leaves a regret on the mind, that ſo much work, and ſo much ingenuity, ſhould not be better beſtowed."

"The truth is," ſaid the Captain, "that in all this huge town, ſo full as it is of folks of all ſorts, there i'n't ſo much as one public place, beſides the play-houſe, where a man, that's to ſay, a man who *is* a man, ought not to be aſhamed to ſhew his face. T'other day they got me to a ridotto; but I believe it will be long enough before they get me to another. I knew no more what to do with myſelf, than if my ſhip's company had been metamorphoſed into Frenchmen. Then, again, there's your famous Ranelagh, that you make ſuch a fuſs about, —why what a dull place is that!—it's the worſt of all."

"Ranelagh dull!"—"Ranelagh dull!" was echoed from mouth to mouth, and all the ladies, as if of one accord, regarded the Captain with looks of the moſt ironical contempt.

"As to Ranelagh," ſaid Mr. Lovel, "moſt indubitably, though the price is plebeian, it is by no means adapted to the plebeian taſte. It requires a certain acquaintance

ance with high life, and—and—and something of—of—something *d'un vrai goût*, to be really sensible of its merit. Those whose—whose connections, and so forth, are not among *les gens comme il faut*, can feel nothing but *ennui* at such a place as Ranelagh."

"Ranelagh!" cried Lord ——, "O, 'tis the divinest place under heaven,—or, indeed,—for aught I know——"

"O you creature!" cried a pretty, but affected young lady, patting him with her fan, "you sha'n't talk so; I know what you are going to say; but, positively, I won't sit by you, if you're so wicked."

"And how can one sit by you, and be good?" said he, "when only to look at you is enough to make one wicked—or wish to be so?"

"Fie, my Lord!" returned she, "you are really insufferable. I don't think I shall speak to you again these seven years."

"What a metamorphosis," cried Lord Orville, "should you make a patriarch of his Lordship!"

"Seven years!" said he, "dear Madam, be contented with telling me you will not speak to me *after* seven years, and I will endeavour to submit."

"O, very well, my Lord," answered she, "pray date the end of our speaking

to each other as early as you pleaſe, I'll promiſe to agree to your time."

"You know, dear Madam," ſaid he, ſipping his tea, "you know I only live in your ſight."

"O yes, my Lord, I have long known that. But I begin to fear we ſhall be too late for Ranelagh this evening."

"O no, Madam," ſaid Mr. Lovel, looking at his watch, "it is but juſt paſt ten."

"No more!" cried ſhe; "O then we ſhall do very well."

All the ladies now ſtarted up, and declared they had no time to loſe.

"Why what the D—l," cried the Captain, leaning forward with both his arms on the table, "are you going to Ranelagh at this time of night?"

The ladies looked at one another, and ſmiled.

"To Ranelagh?" cried Lord ——. "Yes, and I hope you are going too; for we cannot poſſibly excuſe theſe ladies."

"I go to Ranelagh?—if I do, I'll be ——."

Every body now ſtood up, and the ſtranger Lord, coming round to me, ſaid, "*You* go, I hope?"

"No, my Lord, I believe not."

"O you cannot, muſt not be ſo barbarous." And he took my hand, and ran on

ſaying

saying such fine speeches and compliments, that I might almost have supposed myself a goddess, and him a pagan, paying me adoration. As soon as I possibly could, I drew back my hand; but he frequently, in the course of conversation, contrived to take it again, though it was extremely disagreeable to me; and the more so, as I saw that Lord Orville had his eyes fixed upon us, with a gravity of attention that made me uneasy.

And, surely, my dear Sir, it was a great liberty in this Lord, notwithstanding his rank, to treat me so freely. As to Sir Clement, he seemed in misery.

They all endeavoured to prevail with the Captain to join the Ranelagh party; and this Lord told me, in a low voice, that *it was tearing his heart out* to go without me.

During this conversation, Mr. Lovel came forward, and assuming a look of surprise, made me a bow, and enquired how I did, protesting, upon his honour, that he had not seen me before, or would sooner have paid his respects to me.

Though his politeness was evidently constrained, yet I was very glad to be thus assured of having nothing more to fear from him.

The Captain, far from listening to their persuasions of accompanying them to Ranelagh, was quite in a passion at the pro-

poſal, and vowed he would ſooner go to the *Black-hole in Calcutta.*

"But," ſaid Lord ——, "if the *ladies* will take their tea at Ranelagh, you may depend upon our ſeeing them ſafe home, for we ſhall all be proud of the honour of attending them."

"May be ſo," ſaid the Captain; "but I'll tell you what, if one of theſe places be n't enough for them to-night, why to-morrow they ſhall go to ne'er a one."

We inſtantly declared ourſelves very ready to go home.

"It is not for yourſelves that we petition," ſaid Lord ——, "but for *us*; if you have any charity, you will not be ſo cruel as to deny us; we only beg you to prolong our happineſs for a few minutes,—the favour is but a ſmall one for you to grant, though ſo great a one for us to receive."

"To tell you a piece of my mind," ſaid the Captain, ſurlily, "I think you might as well not give the girls ſo much of this palaver: they'll take it all for goſpel. As to Moll, why ſhe's well enough, but nothing extraordinary, though, perhaps, you may perſuade her that her pug-noſe is all the faſhion: and as to the other, why ſhe's good white and red to be ſure; but what

of that?—I'll warrant ſhe'll moulder away as faſt as her neighbours."

"Is there," cried Lord ——, "another man in this place, who, ſeeing ſuch objects, could make ſuch a ſpeech?"

"As to that there," returned the Captain, "I don't know whether there be or no, and, to make free, I don't care; for I ſha'n't go for to model myſelf by any of theſe fair-weather chaps, who dare not ſo much as ſay their ſouls are their own,—and, for aught I know, no more they ben't. I'm almoſt as much aſhamed of my countrymen, as if I was a Frenchman, and I believe in my heart there i'n't a pin to chuſe between them; and, before long, we ſhall hear the very ſailors talking that lingo, and ſee never a ſwabber without a bag and a ſword."

"He, he, he!—well, 'pon honour," cried Mr. Lovel, "you gentlemen of the ocean have a moſt ſevere way of judging."

"Severe! 'fore George, that is impoſſible; for, to cut the matter ſhort, the men, as they call themſelves, are no better than monkeys; and as to the women, why they are mere dolls. So, now you've got my opinion of this ſubject; and ſo I wiſh you good night."

The ladies, who were very impatient to be gone, made their courtſies, and tripped

away, followed by all the gentlemen of their party, except the Lord I have before mentioned, and Lord Orville, who ſtayed to make enquiries of Mrs. Mirvan concerning our leaving town; and then ſaying, with his uſual politeneſs, ſomething civil to each of us, with a very grave air, he quitted us.

Lord —— remained ſome minutes longer, which he ſpent in making a profuſion of compliments to me, by which he prevented my hearing diſtinctly what Lord Orville ſaid, to my great vexation, eſpecially as he looked—I thought ſo, at leaſt,—as if diſpleaſed at his particularity of behaviour to me.

In going to an outward room, to wait for the carriage, I walked, and could not poſſibly avoid it, between this nobleman and Sir Clement Willoughby; and, when the ſervant ſaid the coach ſtopped the way, though the latter offered me his hand, which I ſhould much have preferred, this ſame Lord, without any ceremony, took mine himſelf; and Sir Clement, with a look extremely provoked, conducted Mrs. Mirvan.

In all ranks and all ſtations of life, how ſtrangely do characters and manners differ! Lord Orville, with a politeneſs which knows no intermiſſion, and makes no diſtinction, is as unaſſuming and modeſt, as if he had never

mixed

mixed with the great, and was totally ignorant of every qualification he poſſeſſes; this other Lord, though laviſh of compliments and fine ſpeeches, ſeems to me an entire ſtranger to real good-breeding; whoever ſtrikes his fancy, engroſſes his whole attention. He is forward and bold, has an air of haughtineſs towards men, and a look of libertiniſm towards women, and his conſcious quality ſeems to have given him a freedom in his way of ſpeaking to either ſex, that is very little ſhort of rudeneſs.

When we returned home, we were all low-ſpirited; the evening's entertainment had diſpleaſed the Captain, and his diſpleaſure, I believe, diſconcerted us all.

And here I thought to have concluded my letter; but, to my great ſurpriſe, juſt now we had a viſit from Lord Orville. He called, he ſaid, to pay his reſpects to us before we left town, and made many enquiries concerning our return; and, when Mrs. Mirvan told him we were going into the country without any view of again quitting it, he expreſſed his concern in ſuch terms—ſo polite, ſo flattering, ſo ſerious—that I could hardly forbear being ſorry myſelf. Were I to go immediately to Berry Hill, I am ſure I ſhould feel nothing but joy;—but, now we are joined by this Captain, and by Madame Duval, I muſt own

I expect very little pleasure at Howard Grove.

Before Lord Orville went, Sir Clement Willoughby called. He was more grave than I had ever seen him, and made several attempts to speak to me in a low voice, and to assure me that his regret upon the occasion of our journey, was entirely upon my account. But I was not in spirits, and could not bear to be teazed by him. However, he has so well paid his court to Captain Mirvan, that he gave him a very hearty invitation to the Grove. At this, he brightened,—and, just then, Lord Orville took leave.

No doubt but he was disgusted at this ill-timed, ill-bred partiality; for surely it was very wrong to make an invitation before Lord Orville, in which he was not included! I was so much chagrined, that, as soon as he went, I left the room; and I shall not go down stairs till Sir Clement is gone.

Lord Orville cannot but observe his assiduous endeavours to ingratiate himself into my favour; and does not this extravagant civility of Captain Mirvan, give him reason to suppose, that it meets with our general approbation? I cannot think upon this subject, without inexpressible uneasiness;—and yet, I can think of nothing else.

Adieu,

Adieu, my deareſt Sir. Pray write to me immediately. How many long letters has this one ſhort fortnight produced! More than I may, probably, ever write again: I fear I ſhall have tired you with reading them; but you will now have time to reſt, for I ſhall find but little to ſay in future.

And now, moſt honoured Sir, with all the follies and imperfections which I have thus faithfully recounted, can you, and with unabated kindneſs, ſuffer me to ſign myſelf

Your dutiful,
and moſt affectionate
EVELINA?

LETTER XXIV.

Mr. Villars to Evelina.

Berry Hill, April 22.

HOW much do I rejoice that I can again addreſs my letters to Howard Grove! My Evelina would have grieved had ſhe known the anxiety of my mind, during her reſidence in the great world. My apprehenſions have been inexpreſſibly alarming; and your journal, at once exciting and relieving my fears, has almoſt

wholly occupied me, since the time of your dating it from London.

Sir Clement Willoughby must be an artful designing man; I am extremely irritated at his conduct. The passion he pretends for you has neither sincerity nor honour; the manner and the opportunities he has chosen to declare it, are bordering upon insult.

His unworthy behaviour after the opera, convinces me, that, had not your vehemence frightened him, Queen-Ann-street would have been the last place whither he would have ordered his chariot. O my child, how thankful am I for your escape! I need not now, I am sure, enlarge upon your indiscretion and want of thought, in so hastily trusting yourself with a man so little known to you, and whose gaiety and flightiness should have put you on your guard.

The nobleman you met at the Pantheon, bold and forward as you describe him to be, gives me no apprehension; a man who appears so openly licentious, and who makes his attack with so little regard to decorum, is one who, to a mind such as my Evelina's, can never be seen but with the disgust which his manners ought to excite.

But Sir Clement, though he seeks occasion to give real offence, contrives to avoid all appearance of intentional evil. He is far more dangerous, because more artful;

but

but I am happy to obſerve, that he ſeems to have made no impreſſion upon your heart, and therefore a very little care and prudence may ſecure you from thoſe deſigns which I fear he has formed.

Lord Orville appears to be of a better order of beings. His ſpirited conduct to the meanly impertinent Lovel, and his anxiety for you after the opera, prove him to be a man of ſenſe and of feeling. Doubtleſs, he thought there was much reaſon to tremble for your ſafety, while expoſed to the power of Sir Clement; and he acted with a regard to real honour, that will always incline me to think well of him, in ſo immediately acquainting the Mirvan family with your ſituation. Many men of this age, from a falſe and pretended delicacy to a friend, would have quietly purſued their own affairs, and thought it more honourable to leave an unſuſpecting young creature to the mercy of a libertine, than to riſk his diſpleaſure by taking meaſures for her ſecurity.

Your evident concern at leaving London, is very natural; and yet it afflicts me. I ever dreaded your being too much pleaſed with a life of diſſipation, which youth and vivacity render but too alluring; and I almoſt regret the conſent for your journey, which I had not the reſolution to withhold.

Alas, my child, the artleſſneſs of your nature, and the ſimplicity of your education, alike unfit you for the thorny paths of the great and buſy world. The ſuppoſed obſcurity of your birth and ſituation, makes you liable to a thouſand diſagreeable adventures. Not only my views, but my hopes for your future life, have ever centered in the country. Shall I own to you, that, however I may differ from Captain Mirvan in other reſpects, yet my opinion of the town, its manners, inhabitants, and diverſions, is much upon a level with his own? Indeed it is the general harbour of fraud and of folly, of duplicity and of impertinence; and I wiſh few things more fervently, than that you may have taken a laſting leave of it.

Remember, however, that I only ſpeak in regard to a public and diſſipated life; in private families, we may doubtleſs find as much goodneſs, honeſty, and virtue, in London as in the country.

If contented with a retired ſtation, I ſtill hope I ſhall live to ſee my Evelina the ornament of her neighbourhood, and the pride and delight of her family: giving and receiving joy from ſuch ſociety as may beſt deſerve her affection, and employing herſelf in ſuch uſeful and innocent occupations as may ſecure and merit the tendereſt

love

love of her friends, and the worthieſt ſatiſfaction of her own heart.

Such are my hopes, and ſuch have been my expectations. Diſappoint them not, my beloved child, but chear me with a few lines, that may aſſure me, this one ſhort fortnight ſpent in town, has not undone the work of ſeventeen years ſpent in the country.

ARTHUR VILLARS.

LETTER XXV.

Evelina to the Rev. Mr. Villars.

Howard Grove, April 25.

NO, my dear Sir, no; *the work of ſeventeen years* remains ſuch as it was, ever unworthy your time and your labour, but not more ſo now,—at leaſt I hope not,—than before that fortnight which has ſo much alarmed you.

And yet, I muſt confeſs, that I am not half ſo happy here at preſent, as I was ere I went to town: but the change is in the place, not in me. Captain Mirvan and Madame Duval have ruined Howard Grove. The harmony that reigned here, is diſturbed, our ſchemes are broken, our way of life is altered, and our comfort is deſtroyed.

But

But do not ſuppoſe *London* to be the ſource of theſe evils; for, had our excurſion been any where elſe, ſo diſagreeable an addition to our houſhold, muſt have cauſed the ſame change at our return.

I was ſure you would be diſpleaſed with Sir Clement Willoughby, and therefore I am by no means ſurpriſed at what you ſay of him: but for Lord Orville—I muſt own I had greatly feared, that my weak and imperfect account would not have procured him the good opinion which he ſo well deſerves, and which I am delighted to find you ſeem to have of him. O Sir, could I have done juſtice to the merit of which I believe him poſſeſſed;—could I have painted him to *you* ſuch as he appeared to *me*,—then, indeed, you would have had ſome idea of the claim which he has to your approbation!

After the laſt letter which I wrote in town, nothing more paſſed previous to our journey hither, except a very violent quarrel between Captain Mirvan and Madame Duval. As the Captain intended to travel on horſeback, he had ſettled that we four females ſhould make uſe of his coach. Madame Duval did not come to Queen-Ann-ſtreet, till the carriage had waited ſome time at the door, and then, attended by

Monſieur

Monſieur Du Bois, ſhe made her appearance.

The Captain, impatient to be gone, would not ſuffer them to enter the houſe, but inſiſted that we ſhould immediately get into the coach. We obeyed; but were no ſooner ſeated, than Madame Duval ſaid, "Come, Monſieur Du Bois, theſe girls can make very good room for you; ſit cloſer, children."

Mrs. Mirvan looked quite confounded, and M. Du Bois, after making ſome apologies about crowding us, actually got into the coach, on the ſide with Miſs Mirvan and me. But no ſooner was he ſeated, than the Captain, who had obſerved this tranſaction very quietly, walked up to the coach-door, ſaying, "What, neither with your leave, nor by your leave?"

M. Du Bois ſeemed rather ſhocked, and began to make abundance of excuſes; but the Captain neither underſtood nor regarded him, and, very roughly, ſaid, "Look'ee, *Monſeer*, this here may be a French faſhion, for aught I know;—but Give and Take is fair in all nations; and ſo now, d'ye ſee, I'll make bold to ſhew you an Engliſh one."

And then, ſeizing his wriſt, he made him jump out of the coach.

M. Du Bois inſtantly put his hand upon his

his ſword, and threatened to reſent this indignity. The Captain, holding up his ſtick, bid him draw at his peril. Mrs. Mirvan, greatly alarmed, got out of the coach, and, ſtanding between them, entreated her huſband to re-enter the houſe.

"None of your clack!" cried he, angrily, "what the D—l, do you ſuppoſe I can't manage a Frenchman?"

Mean time, Madame Duval called out to M. Du Bois, "*Eh, laiſſez-le, mon ami, ne le corrigez pas; c'eſt un vilain bête qui n'en vaut pas la peine.*"

"*Monſieur le Capitaine,*" cried M. Du Bois, "*voulez-vous bien me demander pardon?*"

"O ho, you demand pardon, do you?" ſaid the Captain, "I thought as much; I thought you'd come to;—ſo you have loſt your reliſh for an Engliſh ſalutation, have you?" ſtrutting up to him with looks of defiance.

A crowd was now gathering, and Mrs. Mirvan again beſought her huſband to go into the houſe.

"Why what a plague is the woman afraid of?—did you ever know a Frenchman that could not take an affront?—I warrant, *Monſeer* knows what he is about;—don't you, *Monſeer?*"

M. Du Bois, not underſtanding him, only ſaid, "*plait-il, Monſieur?*"

"No,

"No, nor *diſh* me, neither," anſwered the Captain; "but be that as it may, what ſignifies our parleying here? If you've any thing to propoſe, ſpeak at once; if not, why let us go on our journey without more ado."

"*Parbleu, je n'entends rien, moi!*" cried M. Du Bois, ſhrugging his ſhoulders, and looking very diſmal.

Mrs. Mirvan then advanced to him, and ſaid, in French, that ſhe was ſure the Captain had not any intention to affront him, and begged he would deſiſt from a diſpute which could only be productive of mutual miſunderſtanding, as neither of them knew the language of the other.

This ſenſible remonſtrance had the deſired effect, and M. Du Bois, making a bow to every one, except the Captain, very wiſely gave up the point, and took leave.

We then hoped to proceed quietly on our journey; but the turbulent Captain would not yet permit us: he approached Madame Duval with an exulting air, and ſaid, "Why how's this, Madam? what, has your champion deſerted you? why I thought you told me, that you old gentlewomen had it all your own way, among them French ſparks?"

"As to that, Sir," anſwered ſhe, "it's not of no conſequence what you thought; for

for a perſon who can behave in ſuch a low way, may think what he pleaſes for me, for I ſha'n't mind.

"Why, then, Miſtreſs, ſince you muſt needs make ſo free," cried he, "pleaſe to tell me the reaſon why you took the liberty for to aſk any of your followers into my coach, without my leave? Anſwer me to that."

"Why then, pray, Sir," returned ſhe, "tell me the reaſon why you took the liberty to treat the gentleman in ſuch a unpolite way, as to take and pull him neck and heels out? I'm ſure he had n't done nothing to affront you, nor nobody elſe; and I don't know what great hurt he would have done you, by juſt ſitting ſtill in the coach; he would not have eat it."

"What, do you think, then, that my horſes have nothing to do, but to carry about your ſnivelling Frenchmen? If you do, Madam, I muſt make bold to tell you, you are out, for I'll ſee 'em hanged firſt."

"More brute you, then! for they've never carried nobody half ſo good."

"Why, look'ee, Madam, if you muſt needs provoke me, I'll tell you a piece of my mind; you muſt know, I can ſee as far into a mill-ſtone as another man; and ſo, if you thought for to fobb me off with one of your ſmirking French puppies for a ſon-in-law,

in-law, why you'll find yourself in a hobble, —that's all."

"Sir, you're a —— but I won't say what;—but, I protest, I had n't no such a thought, no more had n't Monsieur Du Bois."

"My dear," said Mrs. Mirvan, "we shall be very late."

"Well, well," answered he, "get away then; off with you, as fast as you can, it's high time. As to Molly, she's fine lady enough in all conscience; I want none of your French chaps to make her worse."

And so saying, he mounted his horse, and we drove off. And I could not but think with regret of the different feelings we experienced upon leaving London, to what had belonged to our entering it!

During the journey Madame Duval was so very violent against the Captain, that she obliged Mrs. Mirvan to tell her, that, when in her presence, she must beg her to chuse some other subject of discourse.

We had a most affectionate reception from Lady Howard, whose kindness and hospitality cannot fail of making every body happy, who is disposed so to be.

Adieu, my dearest Sir. I hope, though I have hitherto neglected to mention it, that you have always remembered me to whoever has made any enquiry concerning me.

LETTER

LETTER XXVI.

Evelina to the Rev. Mr. Villars.

Howard Grove, April 27.

O MY dear Sir, I now write in the greatest uneasiness! Madame Duval has made a proposal which terrifies me to death, and which was as unexpected, as it is shocking.

She had been employed for some hours this afternoon in reading letters from London, and, just about tea-time, she sent for me into her room, and said, with a look of great satisfaction, "Come here, child, I've got some very good news to tell you: something that will surprise you, I'll give you my word, for you ha'n't no notion of it."

I begged her to explain herself; and then, in terms which I cannot repeat, she said she had been considering what a shame it was, to see me such a poor country, shame-faced thing, when I ought to be a fine lady; and that she had long, and upon several occasions, blushed for me, though she must own the fault was none of mine: for nothing better could be expected from a girl who had been so immured. However, she assured me she had, at length, hit upon

upon a plan, which would make quite another creature of me.

I waited, without much impatience, to hear what this preface led to; but I was ſoon awakened to more lively ſenſations, when ſhe acquainted me, that her intention was to prove my birthright, and to claim, by law, the inheritance of my real family!

It would be impoſſible for me to expreſs my extreme conſternation, when ſhe thus unfolded her ſcheme. My ſurpriſe and terror were equally great. I could ſay nothing; I heard her with a ſilence which I had not the power to break.

She then expatiated very warmly upon the advantages I ſhould reap from her plan; talked in a high ſtyle of my future grandeur; aſſured me how heartily I ſhould deſpiſe almoſt every body and every thing I had hitherto ſeen; predicted my marrying into ſome family of the firſt rank in the kingdom; and, finally, ſaid I ſhould ſpend a few months in Paris, where my education and manners might receive their laſt poliſh.

She enlarged alſo upon the delight ſhe ſhould have, in common with myſelf, from mortifying the pride of certain people, and ſhewing them, that ſhe was not to be ſlighted with impunity.

In the midſt of this diſcourſe, I was relieved by a ſummons to tea. Madame Duval

val was in great ſpirits; but my emotion was too painful for concealment, and every body enquired into the cauſe. I would fain have waved the ſubject, but Madame Duval was determined to make it public. She told them, that ſhe had it in her head to *make ſomething* of me, and that they ſhould ſoon call me by another name than that of Anville, and yet that ſhe was not going to have the child married, neither.

I could not endure to hear her proceed, and was going to leave the room; which, when Lady Howard perceived, ſhe begged Madame Duval would defer her intelligence to ſome other opportunity; but ſhe was ſo eager to communicate her ſcheme, that ſhe could bear no delay, and therefore they ſuffered me to go, without oppoſition. Indeed, whenever my ſituation or affairs are mentioned by Madame Duval, ſhe ſpeaks of them with ſuch bluntneſs and ſeverity, that I cannot be enjoined a taſk more cruel than to hear her.

I was afterwards acquainted with ſome particulars of the converſation by Miſs Mirvan, who told me that Madame Duval informed them of her plan with the utmoſt complacency, and ſeemed to think herſelf very fortunate in having ſuggeſted it; but ſoon after, ſhe accidentally betrayed, that ſhe had been inſtigated to the ſcheme by

her relations the Branghtons, whose letters, which she received to-day, first mentioned the proposal. She declared that she would have nothing to do with any *round-about ways*, but go openly and instantly to law, in order to prove my birth, real name, and title to the estate of my ancestors.

How impertinent and officious, in these Branghtons, to interfere thus in my concerns! You can hardly imagine what a disturbance this plan has made in the family. The Captain, without enquiring into any particulars of the affair, has peremptorily declared himself against it, merely because it has been proposed by Madame Duval, and they have battled the point together with great violence. Mrs. Mirvan says she will not even *think*, till she hears your opinion. But Lady Howard, to my great surprise, openly avows her approbation of Madame Duval's intention: however, she will write her reasons and sentiments upon the subject to you herself.

As to Miss Mirvan, she is my second self, and neither hopes nor fears but as I do. And as to *me*,—I know not what to say, nor even what to wish; I have often thought my fate peculiarly cruel, to have but one parent, and from that one to be banished for ever;—while, on the other side, I have but too well known and felt the propriety

of

of the ſeparation. And yet, you may much better imagine than I can expreſs, the internal anguiſh which ſometimes oppreſſes my heart, when I reflect upon the ſtrange indifferency, that muſt occaſion a father never to make the leaſt enquiry after the health, the welfare, or even the life of his child!

O Sir, to *me*, the loſs is nothing!—greatly, ſweetly, and moſt benevolently have you guarded me from feeling it;—but for *him*, I grieve indeed!—I muſt be diveſted, not merely of all filial piety, but of all humanity, could I ever think upon this ſubject, and not be wounded to the ſoul.

Again I muſt repeat, I know not what to *wiſh:* think for me, therefore, my deareſt Sir, and ſuffer my doubting mind, that knows not which way to direct its hopes, to be guided by your wiſdom and unerring counſel.

EVELINA.

LETTER

LETTER XXVII.

Lady Howard to the Rev. Mr. Villars.

Howard Grove.

Dear Sir,

I Cannot give a greater proof of the high opinion I have of your candour, than by the liberty I am now going to take, of preſuming to offer you advice, upon a ſubject concerning which you have ſo juſt a claim to act for yourſelf: but I know you have too unaffected a love of juſtice, to be partially tenacious of your own judgment.

Madame Duval has been propoſing a ſcheme which has put us all in commotion, and againſt which, at firſt, in common with the reſt of my family, I exclaimed; but upon more mature conſideration, I own my objections have almoſt wholly vaniſhed.

This ſcheme is no other than to commence a law-ſuit with Sir John Belmont, to prove the validity of his marriage with Miſs Evelyn; the neceſſary conſequence of which proof, will be ſecuring his fortune and eſtate to his daughter.

And why, my dear Sir, ſhould not this be? I know that, upon firſt hearing, ſuch a plan conveys ideas that muſt ſhock you; but I know, too, that your mind is ſupe-

rior to being governed by prejudices, or to oppoſing any important cauſe on account of a few diſagreeable attendant circumſtances.

Your lovely charge, now firſt entering into life, has merit which ought not to be buried in obſcurity. She ſeems born for an ornament to the world. Nature has been bountiful to her of whatever ſhe had to beſtow; and the peculiar attention you have given to her education, has formed her mind to a degree of excellence, that, in one ſo young, I have ſcarce ever ſeen equalled. Fortune, alone, has hitherto been ſparing of her gifts; and ſhe, too, now opens the way which leads to all that is left to wiſh for her.

What your reaſons may have been, my good Sir, for ſo carefully concealing the birth, name, and pretenſions of this amiable girl, and forbearing to make any claim upon Sir John Belmont, I am totally a ſtranger to; but, without knowing, I reſpect them, from the high opinion I have of your character and judgment: but I hope they are not inſuperable; for I cannot but think, that it was never deſigned, for one who ſeems meant to grace the world, to have her life devoted to retirement.

Surely Sir John Belmont, wretch as he has ſhewn himſelf, could never ſee his accompliſhed daughter, and not be proud to

own her, and eager to secure her the inheritance of his fortune. The admiration she met with in town, though merely the effect of her external attractions, was such, that Mrs. Mirvan assures me, she would have had the most splendid offers, had there not seemed to be some mystery in regard to her birth, which, she was well informed, was assiduously, though vainly, endeavoured to be discovered.

Can it be right, my dear Sir, that this promising young creature should be deprived of the fortune, and rank of life, to which she is lawfully entitled, and which you have prepared her to support and to use so nobly? To despise riches, may, indeed, be philosophic, but to dispense them worthily, must, surely, be more beneficial to mankind.

Perhaps a few years, or, indeed, a much shorter time, may make this scheme impracticable: Sir John, though yet young, leads a life too dissipated for long duration; and, when too late, we may regret that something was not sooner done; for it will be next to impossible, after he is gone, to settle or prove any thing with his heirs and executors.

Pardon the earnestness with which I write my sense of this affair; but your charming ward has made me so warmly her friend,

that I cannot be indifferent upon a ſubject of ſuch importance to her future life.

Adieu, my dear Sir;—ſend me ſpeedily an anſwer to this remonſtrance, and believe me to be, &c.

M. HOWARD.

LETTER XXVIII.

Mr. Villars to Lady Howard.

Berry Hill, May 2.

YOUR letter, Madam, has opened a ſource of anxiety to which I look forward with dread, and which to ſee cloſed, I ſcarcely dare expect. I am unwilling to oppoſe my opinion to that of your Ladyſhip, nor, indeed, can I, but by arguments which, I believe, will rather rank me as a hermit, ignorant of the world, and fit only for my cell, than as a proper guardian, in an age ſuch as this, for an accompliſhed young woman. Yet, thus called upon, it behoves me to explain, and endeavour to vindicate, the reaſons by which I have been hitherto guided.

The mother of this dear child,—who was led to deſtruction by her own imprudence, the hardneſs of heart of Madame Duval, and

and the villainy of Sir John Belmont,—was once, what her daughter is now, the beſt beloved of my heart; and her memory, ſo long as my own holds, I ſhall love, mourn, and honour! On the fatal day that her gentle ſoul left its manſion, and not many hours ere ſhe ceaſed to breathe, I ſolemnly plighted my faith, *That her child, if it lived, ſhould know no father, but myſelf, or her acknowledged huſband.*

You cannot, Madam, ſuppoſe that I found much difficulty in adhering to this promiſe, and forbearing to make any *claim* upon Sir John Belmont. Could I feel an affection the moſt paternal for this poor ſufferer, and not abominate her deſtroyer? Could I wiſh to deliver to *him*, who had ſo baſely betrayed the mother, the helpleſs and innocent offspring, who, born in ſo much ſorrow, ſeemed entitled to all the compaſſionate tenderneſs of pity?

For many years, the *name* alone of that man, accidentally ſpoken in my hearing, almoſt diveſted me of my chriſtianity, and ſcarce could I forbear to execrate him. Yet I ſought not, neither did I deſire, to deprive him of his child, had he, with any appearance of contrition, or, indeed, of humanity, endeavoured to become leſs unworthy ſuch a bleſſing;—but he is a ſtranger to all parental feelings, and has,

with a ſavage inſenſibility, forborne to enquire even into the exiſtence of this ſweet orphan, though the ſituation of his injured wife was but too well known to him.

You wiſh to be acquainted with my intentions.—I muſt acknowledge, they were ſuch as I now perceive would not be honoured with your Ladyſhip's approbation: for though I have ſometimes thought of preſenting Evelina to her father, and demanding the juſtice which is her due, yet, at other times, I have both diſdained and feared the application; diſdained, leſt it ſhould be refuſed, and feared, leſt it ſhould be accepted!

Lady Belmont, who was firmly perſuaded of her approaching diſſolution, frequently and earneſtly beſought me, that if her infant was a female, I would not abandon her to the direction of a man ſo wholly unfit to take the charge of her education; but, ſhould ſhe be importunately demanded, that I would retire with her abroad, and carefully conceal her from Sir John, till ſome apparent change in his ſentiments and conduct ſhould announce him leſs improper for ſuch a truſt. And often would ſhe ſay, "Should the poor babe have any feelings correſpondent with its mother's, it will have no want, while under your protection." Alas! ſhe had no ſooner quitted it herſelf,

than

than she was plunged into a gulph of misery, that swallowed up her peace, reputation, and life.

During the childhood of Evelina I suggested a thousand plans for the security of her birth-right;—but I as oftentimes rejected them. I was in a perpetual conflict, between the desire that she should have justice done her, and the apprehension that, while I improved her fortune, I should endanger her mind. However, as her character began to be formed, and her disposition to be displayed, my perplexity abated; the road before me seemed less thorny and intricate, and I thought I could perceive the right path from the wrong: for, when I observed the artless openness, the ingenuous simplicity of her nature; when I saw that her guileless and innocent soul fancied all the world to be pure and disinterested as herself, and that her heart was open to every impression with which love, pity, or art might assail it;—then did I flatter myself, that to follow my own inclination, and to secure her welfare, was the same thing; since, to expose her to the snares and dangers inevitably encircling a house of which the master is dissipated and unprincipled, without the guidance of a mother, or any prudent and sensible female, seemed to me no less than suffering her to stumble into

ſome dreadful pit, when the ſun was in its meridian. My plan, therefore, was not merely to educate and to cheriſh her as my own, but to adopt her the heireſs of my ſmall fortune, and to beſtow her upon ſome worthy man, with whom ſhe might ſpend her days in tranquillity, chearfulneſs, and good-humour, untainted by vice, folly, or ambition.

So much for the time paſt. Such have been the motives by which I have been governed; and I hope they will be allowed not merely to account for, but alſo to juſtify, the conduct which has reſulted from them. It now remains to ſpeak of the time to come.

And here, indeed, I am ſenſible of difficulties which I almoſt deſpair of ſurmounting according to my wiſhes. I pay the higheſt deference to your Ladyſhip's opinion, which it is extremely painful to me not to concur with; yet, I am ſo well acquainted with your goodneſs, that I preſume to hope it would not be abſolutely impoſſible for me to offer ſuch arguments as might lead you to think with me, that this young creature's chance of happineſs ſeems leſs doubtful in retirement, than it would be in the gay and diſſipated world: but why ſhould I perplex your Ladyſhip with reaſoning that can turn to ſo little account?

count? for, alas! what arguments, what perſuaſions can I make uſe of, with any proſpect of ſucceſs, to ſuch a woman as Madame Duval? Her character, and the violence of her diſpoſition, intimidate me from making the attempt: ſhe is too ignorant for inſtruction, too obſtinate for entreaty, and too weak for reaſon.

I will not, therefore, enter into a conteſt from which I have nothing to expect but altercation and impertinence. As ſoon would I diſcuſs the effect of ſound with the deaf, or the nature of colours with the blind, as aim at illuminating with conviction a mind ſo warped by prejudice, ſo much the ſlave of unruly and illiberal paſſions. Unuſed as ſhe is to controul, perſuaſion would but harden, and oppoſition incenſe her. I yield, therefore, to the neceſſity which compels my reluctant acquieſcence, and ſhall now turn all my thoughts upon conſidering of ſuch methods for the conducting this enterprize, as may be moſt conducive to the happineſs of my child, and leaſt liable to wound her ſenſibility.

The law-ſuit, therefore, I wholly and abſolutely diſapprove.

Will you, my dear Madam, forgive the freedom of an old man, if I own myſelf greatly ſurpriſed, that you could, even for a moment, liſten to a plan ſo violent,

ſo public, ſo totally repugnant to all female delicacy? I am ſatisfied your Ladyſhip has not weighed this project. There was a time, indeed, when, to aſſert the innocence of Lady Belmont, and to blazon to the world the *wrongs*, not *guilt*, by which ſhe ſuffered, I propoſed, nay attempted, a ſimilar plan: but then, all aſſiſtance and encouragement was denied. How cruel to the remembrance I bear of her woes, is this tardy reſentment of Madame Duval! She was deaf to the voice of Nature, though ſhe has hearkened to that of Ambition.

Never can I conſent to have this dear and timid girl brought forward to the notice of the world by ſuch a method; a method, which will ſubject her to all the impertinence of curioſity, the ſneers of conjecture, and the ſtings of ridicule. And for what?—the attainment of wealth, which ſhe does not want, and the gratification of vanity, which ſhe does not feel.—A child to appear againſt a father!—no, Madam, old and infirm as I am, I would even yet ſooner convey her myſelf to ſome remote part of the world, though I were ſure of dying in the expedition.

Far different had been the motives which would have ſtimulated her unhappy mother to ſuch a proceeding; all her felicity in this world was irretrievably loſt; her life was become

become a burthen to her, and her fair fame, which she had early been taught to prize above all other things, had received a mortal wound: therefore, to clear her own honour, and to secure from blemish the birth of her child, was all the good which Fortune had reserved herself the *power* of bestowing. But even this last consolation was with-held from her!

Let milder measures be adopted; and—since it must be so,—let application be made to Sir John Belmont; but as to a law-suit, I hope, upon this subject, never more to hear it mentioned.

With Madame Duval, all pleas of delicacy would be ineffectual; her scheme must be opposed by arguments better suited to her understanding. I will not, therefore, talk of its impropriety, but endeavour to prove its inutility. Have the goodness, then, to tell her, that her own intentions would be frustrated by her plan, since, should the law-suit be commenced, and even should the cause be gained, Sir John Belmont would still have it in his power, and, if irritated, no doubt in his inclination, to cut off her grand-daughter with a shilling.

She cannot do better, herself, than to remain quiet and inactive in the affair: the long and mutual animosity between her and Sir

Sir John, will make her interference merely productive of debates and ill-will. Neither would I have Evelina appear till ſummoned. And as to myſelf, I muſt wholly decline *acting*, though I will, with unwearied zeal, devote all my thoughts to giving counſel: but, in truth, I have neither inclination nor ſpirits adequate to engaging perſonally with this man.

My opinion is, that he would pay more reſpect to a letter from your Ladyſhip upon this ſubject, than from any other perſon. I therefore adviſe and hope, that you will yourſelf take the trouble of writing to him, in order to open the affair. When he ſhall be inclined to ſee Evelina, I have for him a poſthumous letter, which his much-injured lady left to be preſented to him, if ever ſuch a meeting ſhould take place.

The views of the Branghtons, in ſuggeſting this ſcheme, are obviouſly intereſted; they hope, by ſecuring to Evelina the fortune of her father, to induce Madame Duval to ſettle her own upon themſelves. In this, however, they would probably be miſtaken; for little minds have ever a propenſity to beſtow their wealth upon thoſe who are already in affluence, and, therefore, the leſs her grand-child requires her aſſiſtance, the more gladly ſhe will give it.

I have

I have but one thing more to add, from which, however, I can by no means recede: my word ſo ſolemnly given to Lady Belmont, that her child ſhould never be owned but with herſelf, muſt be inviolably adhered to.

I am, dear Madam, with great reſpect,

Your Ladyſhip's moſt obedient ſervant,

ARTHUR VILLARS.

LETTER XXIX.

Mr. Villars to Evelina.

Berry Hill, May 2.

HOW ſincerely do I ſympathiſe in the uneaſineſs and concern which my beloved Evelina has ſo much reaſon to feel! The cruel ſcheme in agitation is equally repugnant to my judgment and my inclination,—yet to oppoſe it, ſeems impracticable. To follow the dictates of my own heart, I ſhould inſtantly recall you to myſelf, and never more conſent to your being ſeparated from me; but the manners and opinion of the world demand a different conduct. Hope, however, for the beſt, and be

be satisfied you shall meet with no indignity; if you are not received into your own family as you ought to be, and with the distinction that is your due, you shall leave it for ever; and, once again restored to my protection, secure your own tranquillity, and make, as you have hitherto done, all the happiness of my life!

LETTER XXX.

Evelina to the Rev. Mr. Villars.

Howard Grove, May 6.

THE die is thrown, and I attend the event in trembling! Lady Howard has written to Paris, and sent her letter to town, to be forwarded in the ambassador's packet, and in less than a fortnight, therefore, she expects an answer. O Sir, with what anxious impatience shall I wait its arrival! upon it seems to depend the fate of my future life. My solicitude is so great, and my suspence so painful, that I cannot rest a moment in peace, or turn my thoughts into any other channel.

Deeply interested as I now am in the event, most sincerely do I regret that the plan

plan was ever propoſed: methinks it *cannot* end to my ſatisfaction; for either I muſt be torn from the arms of my *more* than father, —or I muſt have the miſery of being finally convinced, that I am cruelly rejected by him who has the natural claim to that dear title; a title, which, to write, mention, or think of, fills my whole ſoul with filial tenderneſs.

The ſubject is diſcuſſed here eternally. Captain Mirvan and Madame Duval, as uſual, quarrel whenever it is ſtarted: but I am ſo wholly engroſſed by my own reflections, that I cannot even liſten to them. My imagination changes the ſcene perpetually; one moment, I am embraced by a kind and relenting parent, who takes me to that heart from which I have hitherto been baniſhed, and ſupplicates, through me, peace and forgiveneſs from the aſhes of my mother!—at another, he regards me with deteſtation, conſiders me as the living image of an injured ſaint, and repulſes me with horror!—But I will not afflict you with the melancholy phantaſms of my brain, I will endeavour to compoſe my mind to a more tranquil ſtate, and forbear to write again, till I have, in ſome meaſure, ſucceeded.

May Heaven bleſs you, my deareſt Sir! and

and long, long may it continue you on earth, to bleſs

Your grateful

EVELINA!

LETTER XXXI.

Lady Howard to Sir John Belmont, Bart.

Howard Grove, May 5.

Sir,

YOU will, doubtleſs, be ſurpriſed at receiving a letter from one who had for ſo ſhort a period the honour of your acquaintance, and that at ſo great a diſtance of time; but the motive which has induced me to take this liberty, is of ſo delicate a nature, that were I to commence making apologies for my officiouſneſs, I fear my letter would be too long for your patience.

You have, probably, already conjectured the ſubject upon which I mean to treat. My regard for Mr. Evelyn and his amiable daughter was well known to you: nor can I ever ceaſe to be intereſted in whatever belongs to their memory or family.

I muſt own myſelf ſomewhat diſtreſſed in what

what manner to introduce the purport of my writing; yet, as I think that, in affairs of this kind, frankneſs is the firſt requiſite to a good underſtanding between the parties concerned, I will neither torment you nor myſelf with punctilious ceremonies, but proceed inſtantly and openly to the buſineſs which occaſions my giving you this trouble.

I preſume, Sir, it would be ſuperfluous to tell you, that your child reſides ſtill in Dorſetſhire, and is ſtill under the protection of the Reverend Mr. Villars, in whoſe houſe ſhe was born: for, though no enquiries concerning her have reached his ears, or mine, I can never ſuppoſe it poſſible you have forborne to make them. It only remains, therefore, to tell you, that your daughter is now grown up; that ſhe has been educated with the utmoſt care, and the utmoſt ſucceſs; and that ſhe is now a moſt deſerving, accompliſhed, and amiable young woman.

Whatever may be your view for her future deſtination in life, it ſeems time to declare it. She is greatly admired, and, I doubt not, will be very much ſought after: it is proper, therefore, that her future expectations, and your pleaſure concerning her ſhould be made known.

Believe me, Sir, ſhe merits your utmoſt attention

attention and regard. You could not ſee and know her, and remain unmoved by thoſe ſenſations of affection which belong to ſo near and tender a relationſhip. She is the lovely reſemblance of her lovely mother;—pardon, Sir, the liberty I take in mentioning that unfortunate lady, but I think it behoves me, upon this occaſion, to ſhew the eſteem I felt for her; allow me, therefore, to ſay, and be not offended at my freedom, that the memory of that excellent lady has but too long remained under the aſperſions of calumny; ſurely it is time to vindicate her fame!—and how can that be done in a manner more eligible, more grateful to her friends, or more honourable to yourſelf, than by openly receiving as your child, *the daughter of the late Lady Belmont?*

The venerable man who has had the care of her education, deſerves your warmeſt acknowledgments, for the unremitting pains he has taken, and attention he has ſhewn, in the diſcharge of his truſt. Indeed ſhe has been peculiarly fortunate in meeting with ſuch a friend and guardian: a more worthy man, or one whoſe character ſeems nearer to perfection, does not exiſt.

Permit me to aſſure you, Sir, ſhe will amply repay whatever regard and favour you may hereafter ſhew her, by the comfort and happineſs you cannot fail to find

in

in her affection and duty. To be owned *properly* by you, is the first wish of her heart; and I am sure, that to merit your approbation will be the first study of her life.

I fear that you will think this address impertinent; but I must rest upon the goodness of my intention to plead my excuse.

I am, Sir,

Your most obedient humble servant,

M. Howard.

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25. Love for Love; Mr. Wilſon as Ben, and Mrs. Mattocks as Miſs Prue, Vignette by Edwards and Byrne.

Mortimer invt et delin.

Walker sculp!

T. Lowndes Published Nov.r 24 1779.

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EVELINA,

OR, A

YOUNG LADY'S

ENTRANCE

INTO THE

WORLD.

IN A SERIES OF LETTERS.

THE SECOND EDITION.

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M,DCC,LXXIX.

EVELINA.

EVELINA.

LETTER I.

Evelina to the Rev. Mr. Villars.

Howard Grove, Kent, May 10.

OUR houſe has been enlivened to-day, by the arrival of a London viſitor; and the neceſſity I have been under of concealing the uneaſineſs of my mind, has made me exert myſelf ſo effectually, that I even think it is really diminiſhed; or, at leaſt, my thoughts are not ſo totally, ſo very anxiouſly occupied by one only ſubject, as they lately were.

I was ſtrolling this morning with Miſs Mirvan, down a lane about a mile from the grove, when we heard the trampling of

horſes; and, fearing the narrowneſs of the paſſage, we were turning haſtily back, but ſtopped upon hearing a voice call out, "Pray, Ladies, don't be frightened, for I will walk my horſe." We turned again, and then ſaw Sir Clement Willoughby. He diſmounted, and approaching us, with the reins in his hand, preſently recollected us. "Good Heaven," cried he, with his uſual quickneſs, "do I ſee Miſs Anville?—and you too, Miſs Mirvan?"

He immediately ordered his ſervant to take charge of his horſe, and then, advancing to us, took a hand of each, which he preſſed to his lips, and ſaid a thouſand fine things concerning his good fortune, our improved looks, and the charms of the country, when inhabited by ſuch rural deities. "The town, Ladies, has languiſhed ſince your abſence,—or, at leaſt, I have ſo much languiſhed myſelf, as to be abſolutely inſenſible to all it had to offer. One refreſhing breeze, ſuch as I now enjoy, awakens me to new vigour, life, and ſpirit. But I never before had the good luck to ſee the country in ſuch perfection."

"Has not almoſt every body left town, Sir?" ſaid Miſs Mirvan.

"I am aſhamed to anſwer you, Madam—but indeed it is as full as ever, and will

continue

continue so, till after the birth-day. However, you Ladies were so little seen, that there are but few who know what it has lost. For my own part, I felt it too sensibly, to be able to endure the place any longer."

"Is there any body remaining there, that we were acquainted with?" cried I.

"O yes, Ma'am." And then he named two or three persons we have seen when with him; but he did not mention Lord Orville, and I would not ask him, lest he should think me curious. Perhaps, if he stays here some time, he may speak of him by accident.

He was proceeding in this complimentary style, when we were met by the Captain; who no sooner perceived Sir Clement, than he hastened up to him, gave him a hearty shake of the hand, a cordial slap on the back, and some other equally gentle tokens of satisfaction, assuring him of his great joy at his visit, and declaring he was as glad to see him as if he had been a messenger who brought news that a French ship was sunk. Sir Clement, on the other side, expressed himself with equal warmth, and protested he had been so eager to pay his respects to Captain Mirvan, that he had left London in its full lustre, and a

thousand engagements unanswered, merely to give himself that pleasure.

"We shall have rare sport," said the Captain, "for do you know the old Frenchwoman is among us? 'Fore George, I have scarce made any use of her yet, by reason I have had nobody with me that could enjoy a joke: howsomever, it shall go hard but we'll have some diversion now."

Sir Clement very much approved of the proposal; and we then went into the house, where he had a very grave reception from Mrs. Mirvan, who is by no means pleased with his visit, and a look of much discontent from Madame Duval, who said to me, in a low voice, "I'd as soon have seen Old Nick as that man, for he's the most impertinentest person in the world, and is n't never of my side."

The Captain is now actually occupied in contriving some scheme which, he says, is *to play the old Dowager off*; and so eager and delighted is he at the idea, that he can scarcely restrain his raptures sufficiently to conceal his design, even from herself. I wish, however, since I do not dare put Madame Duval upon her guard, that he had the delicacy not to acquaint me with his intention.

LETTER

LETTER II.

Evelina in continuation.

May 13th.

THE Captain's operations are begun, —and, I hope, ended; for indeed, poor Madame Duval has already but too much reaſon to regret Sir Clement's viſit to Howard Grove.

Yeſterday morning, during breakfaſt, as the Captain was reading the news-paper, Sir Clement ſuddenly begged to look at it, ſaying he wanted to know if there was any account of a tranſaction, at which he had been preſent the evening before his journey hither, concerning a poor French-man, who had got into a ſcrape which might coſt him his life.

The Captain demanded particulars; and then Sir Clement told a long ſtory, of being with a party of country friends, at the Tower, and hearing a man call out for mercy in French; and that when he enquired into the occaſion of his diſtreſs, he was informed, that he had been taken up upon ſuſpicion of treaſonable practices againſt the government. "The poor fellow," continued he, "no ſooner found that I ſpoke French, than he beſought me

to hear him, protesting that he had no evil designs; that he had been but a short time in England, and only waited the return of a Lady from the country, to quit it for ever."

Madame Duval changed colour, and listened with the utmost attention.

"Now, though I by no means approve of so many foreigners continually flocking into our country," added he, addressing himself to the Captain, "yet I could not help pitying the poor wretch, because he did not know enough of English to make his defence: however, I found it impossible to assist him, for the mob would not suffer me to interfere. In truth, I am afraid he was but roughly handled."

"Why, did they duck him?" said the Captain.

"Something of that sort," answered he.

"So much the better! so much the better!" cried the Captain, "an impudent French puppy!—I'll bet you what you will he was a rascal. I only wish all his countrymen were served the same."

"I wish you had been in his place, with all my soul!" cried Madame Duval, warmly;—"but pray, Sir, did n't nobody know who this poor gentleman was?"

"Why,

"Why, I did hear his name," answered Sir Clement, "but I cannot recollect it."

"It was n't,—it was n't—Du Bois?" stammered out Madame Duval.

"The very name!" answered he, "yes, Du Bois, I remember it now."

Madame Duval's cup fell from her hand, as she repeated "Du Bois! Monsieur Du Bois, did you say?"

"Du Bois! why that's *my* friend," cried the Captain, "that's *Monseer Slippery*, i'n't it?—Why he's plaguy fond of sousing work; howsomever, I'll be sworn they gave him his fill of it."

"And I'll be sworn," cried Madame Duval, "that you're a—but I don't believe nothing about it, so you need n't be so overjoyed, for I dare say it was no more Monsieur Du Bois than I am."

"I thought at the time," said Sir Clement, very gravely, "that I had seen the gentleman before, and now I recollect, I think it was in company with you, Madam."

"With *me*, Sir!" cried Madame Duval.

"Say you so!" said the Captain, "why then, it must be he, as sure as you're alive!—Well but, my good friend, what will they do with poor *Monseer?*"

"It is difficult to say," answered Sir Clement, very thoughtfully, "but I should suppose, that if he has not good friends to appear for him, he will be in a very unpleasant situation; for these are serious sort of affairs."

"Why do you think they'll hang him?" demanded the Captain.

Sir Clement shook his head, but made no answer.

Madame Duval could no longer contain her agitation; she started from her chair, repeating, with a voice half choaked, "Hang him!—they can't,—they shan't,—let them at their peril!—however, it's all false, and I won't believe a word of it;—but I'll go to town this very moment, and see M. Du Bois myself;—I won't wait for nothing."

Mrs. Mirvan begged her not to be alarmed; but she flew out of the room, and up stairs into her own apartment. Lady Howard blamed both the gentlemen for having been so abrupt, and followed her. I would have accompanied her, but the Captain stopped me; and, having first laughed very heartily, said he was going to read his commission to his ship's company.

"Now, do you see," said he, "as to Lady Howard, I sha'nt pretend for to enlist her into my service, and so I shall e'en leave

leave her to make it out as well as she can; but as to all you, I expect obedience and submission to orders; I am now upon a hazardous expedition, having undertaken to convoy a crazy vessel to the shore of Mortification; so, d'ye see, if any of you have any thing to propose, that will forward the enterprize,—why speak and welcome; but if any of you, that are of my chosen crew, capitulate, or enter into any treaty with the enemy,—I shall look upon you as mutinying, and turn you adrift."

Having finished this harangue, which was interlarded with many expressions, and sea-phrases, that I cannot recollect, he gave Sir Clement a wink of intelligence, and left us to ourselves.

Indeed, notwithstanding the attempts I so frequently make of writing some of the Captain's conversation, I can only give you a faint idea of his language; for almost every other word he utters, is accompanied by an oath, which, I am sure, would be as unpleasant for you to read, as for me to write. And, besides, he makes use of a thousand sea-terms, which are to me quite unintelligible.

Poor Madame Duval sent to enquire at all probable places, whether she could be conveyed to town in any stage-coach: but the Captain's servant brought her for an-

ſwer, that no London ſtage would paſs near Howard Grove till to-day. She then ſent to order a chaiſe; but was ſoon aſſured, that no horſes could be procured. She was ſo much inflamed by theſe diſappointments, that ſhe threatened to ſet out for town on foot, and it was with difficulty that Lady Howard diſſuaded her from this mad ſcheme.

The whole morning was filled up with theſe enquiries. But, when we were all aſſembled to dinner, ſhe endeavoured to appear perfectly unconcerned, and repeatedly proteſted that ſhe gave not any credit to the report, as far as it regarded M. Du Bois, being very certain that he was not the perſon in queſtion.

The Captain uſed the moſt provoking efforts to convince her that ſhe deceived herſelf; while Sir Clement, with more art, though not leſs malice, affected to be of her opinion; but, at the ſame time that he pretended to relieve her uneaſineſs, by ſaying that he doubted not having miſtaken the name, he took care to enlarge upon the danger to which the *unknown gentleman* was expoſed, and expreſſed great concern at his perilous ſituation.

Dinner was hardly removed, when a letter was delivered to Madame Duval. The moment ſhe had read it, ſhe haſtily demanded

manded from whom it came? "A country boy brought it," answered the servant, "but he would not wait."

"Run after him this instant!" cried she, "and be sure you bring him back. *Mon Dieu! quel avanture! que ferai-je?*"

"What's the matter? what's the matter?" said the Captain.

"Why nothing,—nothing's the matter. *O mon Dieu!*"

And she rose, and walked about the room.

"Why, what—has *Monseer* sent to you?" continued the Captain: "is that there letter from him?"

"No,—it i'n't;—besides, if it is, it's nothing to you."

"O then, I'm sure it is! Pray now, Madame, don't be so close; come, tell us all about it,—what does he say? how did he relish the horse-pond?—which did he find best, souſing *single* or *double?*—'Fore George, 'twas plaguy unlucky you was not with him!"

"It's no such a thing, Sir," cried she, very angrily, "and if you're so very fond of a horse-pond, I wish you'd put yourself into one, and not be always a thinking about other people's being served so."

The man then came in, to acquaint her they could not overtake the boy. She scolded

ſcolded violently, and was in ſuch perturbation, that Lady Howard interfered, and begged to know the cauſe of her uneaſineſs, and whether ſhe could aſſiſt her?

Madame Duval caſt her eyes upon the Captain and Sir Clement, and ſaid ſhe ſhould be glad to ſpeak to her Ladyſhip, without ſo many witneſſes.

"Well, then, Miſs Anville," ſaid the Captain, turning to me, "do you and Molly go into another room, and ſtay there till Mrs. Duval has opened her mind to us."

"So you may think, Sir," cried ſhe, "but who's fool then? no, no, you need n't trouble yourſelf to make a ninny of me, neither, for I'm not ſo eaſily taken in, I'll aſſure you."

Lady Howard then invited her into the dreſſing-room, and I was deſired to attend her.

As ſoon as we had ſhut the door, "O my Lady," exclaimed Madame Duval, "here's the moſt cruelleſt thing in the world has happened!—but that Captain is ſuch a beaſt, I can't ſay nothing before him,—but it's all true! poor M. Du Bois is tooked up!"

Lady Howard begged her to be comforted, ſaying that, as M. Du Bois was certainly

tainly innocent, there could be no doubt of his ability to clear himself.

"To be sure, my Lady," answered she, "I know he is innocent; and to be sure they'll never be so wicked as to hang him for nothing?"

"Certainly not;" replied Lady Howard, "you have no reason to be uneasy. This is not a country where punishment is inflicted without proof."

"Very true, my Lady; but the worst thing is this; I cannot bear that that fellow, the Captain, should know about it; for if he does, I sha'n't never hear the last of it;—no more won't poor M. Du Bois."

"Well, well," said Lady Howard, "shew me the letter, and I will endeavour to advise you."

The letter was then produced. It was signed by the clerk of a country justice; who acquainted her, that a prisoner, then upon trial for suspicion of treasonable practices against the government, was just upon the point of being committed to jail, but having declared that he was known to her, this clerk had been prevailed upon to write, in order to enquire if she really could speak to the character and family of a Frenchman who called himself Pierre Du Bois.

When

When I heard the letter, I was quite amazed at its ſucceſs. So improbable did it ſeem, that a foreigner ſhould be taken before a *country* juſtice of peace, for a crime of ſo dangerous a nature, that I cannot imagine how Madame Duval could be alarmed, even for a moment. But, with all her violence of temper, I ſee that ſhe is eaſily frightened, and, in fact, more cowardly than many who have not half her ſpirit; and ſo little does ſhe reflect upon circumſtances, or probability, that ſhe is continually the dupe of her own—I ought not to ſay *ignorance*, but yet, I can think of no other word.

I believe that Lady Howard, from the beginning of the tranſaction, ſuſpected ſome contrivance of the Captain, and this letter, I am ſure, muſt confirm her ſuſpicion: however, though ſhe is not at all pleaſed with his frolick, yet ſhe would not hazard the conſequence of diſcovering his deſigns: her looks, her manner, and her character, made me draw this concluſion from her apparent perplexity; for not a word did ſhe ſay, that implied any doubt of the authenticity of the letter. Indeed there ſeems to be a ſort of tacit agreement between her and the Captain, that ſhe ſhould not appear to be acquainted with his ſchemes;

by

by which means she at once avoids quarrels, and supports her dignity.

While she was considering what to propose, Madame Duval begged to have the use of her Ladyship's chariot, that she might go immediately to the assistance of her friend. Lady Howard politely assured her, that it would be extremely at her service; and then Madame Duval besought her not to own to the Captain what had happened, protesting that she could not endure he should know poor M. du Bois had met with so unfortunate an accident. Lady Howard could not help smiling, though she readily promised not to *inform* the Captain of the affair. As to me, she desired my attendance; which I was by no means rejoiced at, as I was certain she was going upon a fruitless errand.

I was then commissioned to order the chariot.

At the foot of the stairs I met the Captain, who was most impatiently waiting the result of the conference. In an instant we were joined by Sir Clement. A thousand enquiries were then made concerning Madame Duval's opinion of the letter, and her intentions upon it: and when I would have left them, Sir Clement, pretending equal eagerness with the Captain, caught my hand, and repeatedly detained me, to ask

some

ſome frivolous queſtion, to the anſwer of which he muſt be totally indifferent. At length, however, I broke from them; they retired into the parlour, and I executed my commiſſion.

The carriage was ſoon ready, and Madame Duval having begged Lady Howard to ſay ſhe was not well, ſtole ſoftly down ſtairs, deſiring me to follow her. The chariot was ordered at the garden-door; and when we were ſeated, ſhe told the man, according to the clerk's directions, to drive to Mr. Juſtice Tyrell's, aſking, at the ſame time, how many miles off he lived?

I expected he would have anſwered that he knew of no ſuch perſon; but, to my great ſurpriſe, he ſaid, "Why 'Squire Tyrell lives about nine miles beyond the park."

"Drive faſt, then," cried ſhe, "and you ſha'n't be no worſe for it."

During our ride, which was extremely tedious, ſhe tormented herſelf with a thouſand fears for M. Du Bois' ſafety; and piqued herſelf very much upon having eſcaped unſeen by the Captain, not only that ſhe avoided his triumph, but becauſe ſhe knew him to be ſo much M. Du Bois' enemy, that ſhe was ſure he would prejudice the Juſtice againſt him, and endeavour to take away his life. For my part,

I was

I was quite ashamed of being engaged in so ridiculous an affair, and could only think of the absurd appearance we should make upon our arrival at Mr. Tyrell's.

When we had been out near two hours, and expected every moment to stop at the place of our destination, I observed that Lady Howard's servant, who attended us on horseback, rode on forward till he was out of sight, and soon after returning, came up to the chariot-window, and delivering a note to Madame Duval, said he had met a boy, who was just coming with it to Howard Grove, from the Clerk of Mr. Tyrell.

While she was reading it, he rode round to the other window, and, making a sign for secrecy, put into my hand a slip of paper, on which was written, "Whatever happens, be not alarmed,—for *you* are safe, —though you endanger all mankind!"

I readily imagined that Sir Clement must be the author of this note, which prepared me to expect some disagreeable adventure: but I had no time to ponder upon it, for Madame Duval had no sooner read her own letter, than, in an angry tone of voice, she exclaimed, "Why now what a thing is this! here we're come all this way for nothing!"

She then gave me the note, which informed her, that she need not trouble herself to go to Mr. Tyrell's, as the prisoner had had the address to escape. I congratulated her upon this fortunate incident; but she was so much concerned at having rode so far in vain, that she seemed less pleased than provoked. However, she ordered the man to make what haste he could home, as she hoped, at least, to return before the Captain should suspect what had passed.

The carriage turned about, and we journeyed so quietly for near an hour, that I began to flatter myself we should be suffered to proceed to Howard Grove without further molestation, when suddenly, the footman called out, "John, are we going right?"

"Why, I a'n't sure," said the coachman, "but I'm afraid we turned wrong."

"What do you mean by that, Sirrah?" said Madame Duval, "why if you lose your way, we shall be all in the dark."

"I think we should turn to the left," said the footman.

"To the left!" answered the other, "No, no, I'm partly sure we should turn to the right."

"You had better make some enquiry." said I.

"*Ma*

"*Ma foi*," cried Madame Duval, "we're in a fine hole, here!—they neither of them know no more than the poſt. However, I'll tell my Lady, as ſure as you're born, ſo you'd better find the way."

"Let's try this lane," ſaid the footman.

"No," ſaid the coachman, "that's the road to Canterbury; we had beſt go ſtraight on."

"Why that's the direct London road," returned the footman, "and will lead us twenty miles about."

"*Pardi*," cried Madame Duval, "why they won't go one way nor t'other! and, now we're come all this jaunt for nothing, I ſuppoſe we ſhan't get home to-night!"

"Let's go back to the public-houſe," ſaid the footman, "and aſk for a guide."

"No, no," ſaid the other, "if we ſtay here a few minutes, ſomebody or other will paſs by: and the horſes are almoſt knocked up already."

"Well, I proteſt," cried Madame Duval, "I'd give a guinea to ſee them ſots both horſe-whipped! As ſure as I'm alive, they're drunk! Ten to one but they'll overturn us next!"

After much debating, they, at length, agreed to go on, till we came to ſome inn, or met with a paſſenger who could direct us. We ſoon arrived at a ſmall farm-houſe, and

and the footman alighted, and went into it.

In a few minutes he returned, and told us we might proceed, for that he had procured a direction; "But," added he, "it seems there are some thieves hereabouts; and so the best way will be for you to leave your watches and purses with the farmer, who I know very well, and who is an honest man, and a tenant of my Lady's."

"Thieves!" cried Madame Duval, looking aghast, "the Lord help us!—I've no doubt but we shall be all murdered!"

The farmer came up to us, and we gave him all we were worth, and the servants followed our example. We then proceeded, and Madame Duval's anger so entirely subsided, that, in the mildest manner imaginable, she intreated them to make haste, and promised to tell their Lady how diligent and obliging they had been. She perpetually stopped them, to ask if they apprehended any danger; and was, at length, so much overpowered by her fears, that she made the footman fasten his horse to the back of the carriage, and then come and seat himself within it. My endeavours to encourage her were fruitless; she sat in the middle, held the man by the arm, and protested that if he did but save her life, she would

make his fortune. Her uneaſineſs gave me much concern, and it was with the utmoſt difficulty I forbore to acquaint her that ſhe was impoſed upon; but the mutual fear of the Captain's reſentment to me, and of her own to him, neither of which would have any moderation, deterred me. As to the footman, he was evidently in torture from reſtraining his laughter, and I obſerved that he was frequently obliged to make moſt horrid grimaces, from pretended fear, in order to conceal his riſibility.

Very ſoon after, "The robbers are coming!" cried the coachman.

The footman opened the door, and jumped out of the chariot.

Madame Duval gave a loud ſcream.

I could no longer preſerve my ſilence. "For Heaven's ſake, my dear Madam," ſaid I, "don't be alarmed,—you are in no danger—you are quite ſafe,—there is nothing but—"

Here the chariot was ſtopped, by two men in maſks, who, at each ſide, put in their hands, as if for our purſes. Madame Duval ſunk to the bottom of the chariot, and implored their mercy. I ſhrieked involuntarily, although prepared for the attack: one of them held me faſt, while the

other

other tore poor Madame Duval out of the carriage, in ſpite of her cries, threats, and reſiſtance.

I was really frightened, and trembled exceedingly. "My angel!" cried the man who held me, "you cannot ſurely be alarmed,—do you not know me?—I ſhall hold myſelf in eternal abhorrence, if I have really terrified you."

"Indeed, Sir Clement, you have," cried I, —"but, for Heaven's ſake, where is Madame Duval?—why is ſhe forced away?"

"She is perfectly ſafe; the Captain has her in charge: but ſuffer me now, my adored Miſs Anville, to take the only opportunity that is allowed me, to ſpeak upon another, a much dearer, much ſweeter ſubject."

And then he haſtily came into the chariot, and ſeated himſelf next to me. I would fain have diſengaged myſelf from him, but he would not let me; "Deny me not, moſt charming of women," cried he, "deny me not this only moment that is lent me, to pour forth my ſoul into your gentle ears,—to tell you how much I ſuffer from your abſence,—how much I dread your diſpleaſure,—and how cruelly I am affected by your coldneſs!"

"O Sir,

"O Sir, this is no time for such language, — pray leave me, pray go to the relief of Madame Duval,—I cannot bear that she should be treated with such indignity."

"And will you,—can you command my absence?—When may I speak to you, if not now? — does the Captain suffer me to breathe a moment out of his sight?—and are not a thousand impertinent people for ever at your elbow."

"Indeed, Sir Clement, you must change your style, or I will not hear you. The *impertinent people* you mean, are among my best friends, and you would not, if you really wished me well, speak of them so disrespectfully."

"Wish you well! — O Miss Anville, point but out to me how, in what manner I may convince you of the fervour of my passion,—tell me but what services you will accept from me, — and you shall find my life, my fortune, my whole soul at your devotion."

"I want *nothing*, Sir, that you can offer;—I beg you not to talk to me so—so strangely. Pray leave me, and pray assure yourself, you cannot take any method so successless to shew any regard for me, as entering into schemes so frightful to Ma-

dame Duval, and so disagreeable to myself."

"The scheme was the Captain's; I even opposed it: though, I own, I could not refuse myself the so-long-wished-for happiness, of speaking to you once more, without so many of—your *friends* to watch me. And I had flattered myself, that the note I charged the footman to give you would have prevented the alarm you have received."

"Well, Sir, you have now, I hope, said enough; and, if you will not go yourself to see for Madame Duval, at least suffer *me* to enquire what is become of her."

"And when may I speak to you again?"

"No matter when,—I don't know,—perhaps—"

"Perhaps what, my angel?"

"Perhaps *never*, Sir,—if you torment me thus."

"Never! O Miss Anville, how cruel, how piercing to my soul is that icy word!—Indeed, I cannot endure such displeasure."

"Then, Sir, you must not provoke it. Pray leave me directly."

"I will, Madam: but let me, at least, make a merit of my obedience,—allow me to hope that you will, in future, be less averse

averſe to truſting yourſelf for a few moments alone with me."

I was ſurpriſed at the freedom of this requeſt; but, while I heſitated how to anſwer it, the other maſk came up to the chariot-door, and, in a voice almoſt ſtifled with laughter, ſaid, "I've done for her!—the old buck is ſafe;—but we muſt ſheer off directly, or we ſhall be all aground."

Sir Clement inſtantly left me, mounted his horſe, and rode off. The Captain, having given ſome directions to the ſervants, followed him.

I was both uneaſy and impatient to know the fate of Madame Duval, and immediately got out of the chariot to ſeek her. I deſired the footman to ſhew me which way ſhe was gone; he pointed with his finger, by way of anſwer, and I ſaw that he dared not truſt his voice to make any other. I walked on, a very quick pace, and ſoon, to my great conſternation, perceived the poor lady, ſeated upright in a ditch. I flew to her, with unfeigned concern at her ſituation. She was ſobbing, nay, almoſt roaring, and in the utmoſt agony of rage and terror. As ſoon as ſhe ſaw me, ſhe redoubled her cries, but her voice was ſo broken, I could not underſtand a word ſhe ſaid. I was ſo much ſhocked, that it was with

difficulty I forbore exclaiming againſt the cruelty of the Captain, for thus wantonly ill-treating her; and I could not forgive myſelf for having paſſively ſuffered the deception. I uſed my utmoſt endeavours to comfort her, aſſuring her of our preſent ſafety, and begging her to riſe, and return to the chariot.

Almoſt burſting with paſſion, ſhe pointed to her feet, and with frightful violence, ſhe actually beat the ground with her hands.

I then ſaw, that her feet were tied together with a ſtrong rope, which was faſtened to the upper branch of a tree, even with an hedge which ran along the ditch where ſhe ſat. I endeavoured to untie the knot, but ſoon found it was infinitely beyond my ſtrength. I was, therefore, obliged to apply to the footman; but being very unwilling to add to his mirth, by the ſight of Madame Duval's ſituation, I deſired him to lend me a knife; I returned with it, and cut the rope. Her feet were ſoon diſentangled, and then, though with great difficulty, I aſſiſted her to riſe. But what was my aſtoniſhment, when, the moment ſhe was up, ſhe hit me a violent ſlap on the face! I retreated from her with precipitation and dread, and ſhe then loaded me with reproaches, which, though almoſt unintelligible, convinced me that ſhe imagined

I had

I had voluntarily deſerted her; but ſhe ſeemed not to have the ſlighteſt ſuſpicion that ſhe had not been attacked by real robbers.

I was ſo much ſurpriſed and confounded at the blow, that, for ſome time, I ſuffered her to rave without making any anſwer; but her extreme agitation, and real ſuffering, ſoon diſpelled my anger, which all turned into compaſſion. I then told her, that I had been forcibly detained from following her, and aſſured her of my real ſorrow at her ill uſage.

She began to be ſomewhat appeaſed; and I again entreated her to return to the carriage, or give me leave to order that it ſhould draw up to the place where we ſtood. She made no anſwer, till I told her, that the longer we remained ſtill, the greater would be the danger of our ride home. Struck with this hint, ſhe ſuddenly, and with haſty ſteps, moved forward.

Her dreſs was in ſuch diſorder, that I was quite ſorry to have her figure expoſed to the ſervants, who all of them, in imitation of their maſter, hold her in deriſion: however, the diſgrace was unavoidable.

The ditch, happily, was almoſt quite dry, or ſhe muſt have ſuffered ſtill more ſeriouſly; yet, ſo forlorn, ſo miſerable a

figure, I never before ſaw. Her head-dreſs had fallen off; her linen was torn; her negligee had not a pin left in it; her petticoats ſhe was obliged to hold on; and her ſhoes were perpetually ſlipping off. She was covered with dirt, weeds, and filth, and her face was really horrible, for the pomatum and powder from her head, and the duſt from the road, were quite *paſted* on her ſkin by her tears, which, with her *rouge*, made ſo frightful a mixture, that ſhe hardly looked human.

The ſervants were ready to die with laughter, the moment they ſaw her; but not all my remonſtrances could prevail upon her to get into the carriage, till ſhe had moſt vehemently reproached them both, for not reſcuing her. The footman, fixing his eyes on the ground, as if fearful of again truſting himſelf to look at her, proteſted that the robbers had vowed they would ſhoot him, if he moved an inch, and that one of them had ſtayed to watch the chariot, while the other carried her off; adding, that the reaſon of their behaving ſo barbarouſly, was to revenge our having ſecured our purſes. Notwithſtanding her anger, ſhe gave immediate credit to what he ſaid, and really imagined that her want of money had irritated the pretended robbers to treat her with ſuch cruelty. I determined,

termined, therefore, to be carefully upon my guard, not to betray the impoſition, which could now anſwer no other purpoſe, than occaſioning an irreparable breach between her and the Captain.

Juſt as we were ſeated in the chariot, ſhe diſcovered the loſs which her head had ſuſtained, and called out, "My God! what is becomed of my hair?—why the villain has ſtole all my curls!"

She then ordered the man to run and ſee if he could find any of them in the ditch. He went, and preſently returning, produced a great quantity of hair, in ſuch a naſty condition, that I was amazed ſhe would take it; and the man, as he delivered it to her, found it impoſſible to keep his countenance; which ſhe no ſooner obſerved, than all her ſtormy paſſions were again raiſed. She flung the battered curls in his face, ſaying, "Sirrah, what do you grin for? I wiſh you'd been ſerved ſo yourſelf, and you would n't have found it no ſuch joke: you are the impudenteſt fellow ever I ſee, and if I find you dare grin at me any more, I ſhall make no ceremony of boxing your ears."

Satisfied with the threat, the man haſtily retired, and we drove on.

Her anger now ſubſiding into grief, ſhe began moſt ſorrowfully to lament her caſe.

"I believe," she cried, "never nobody was so unlucky as I am! and so here, because I ha'nt had misfortunes enough already, that puppy has made me lose my curls!—Why, I can't see nobody without them:—only look at me,—I was never so bad off in my life before. *Pardi*, if I'd know'd as much, I'd have brought two or three sets with me: but I'd never a thought of such a thing as this."

Finding her now somewhat pacified, I ventured to ask an account of her adventure, which I will endeavour to write in her own words.

"Why, child, all this misfortune comes of that puppy's making us leave our money behind us; for as soon as the robber see I did not put nothing in his hands, he lugged me out of the chariot by main force, and I verily thought he'd have murdered me. He was as strong as a lion; I was no more in his hands than a child. But I believe never nobody was so abused before, for he dragged me down the road, pulling and hawling me all the way, as if I'd no more feeling than a horse. I'm sure I wish I could see that man cut up and quartered alive! however, he'll come to the gallows, that's one good thing. So, as soon as we'd got out of sight of the chariot,—though he need n't have been afraid,

for

for if he'd beat me to a mummy, thoſe cowardly fellows would n't have ſaid nothing to it.—So, when I was got there, what does he do, but, all of a ſudden, he takes me by both the ſhoulders, and he gives me ſuch a ſhake!—*Mon Dieu!* I ſhall never forget it, if I live to be an hundred. I'm ſure I dare ſay I'm out of joint all over. And, though I made as much noiſe as ever I could, he took no more notice of it than nothing at all, but there he ſtood, ſhaking me in that manner, as if he was doing it for a wager. I'm determined, if it coſts me all my fortune, I'll ſee that villain hanged. He ſhall be found out, if there's e'er a juſtice in England. So when he had ſhook me till he was tired, and I felt all over like a jelly, without ſaying never a word, he takes and pops me into the ditch! I'm ſure I thought he'd have murdered me, as much as I ever thought any thing in my life, for he kept bumping me about, as if he thought nothing too bad for me. However, I'm reſolved I'll never leave my purſe behind me again, the longeſt day I have to live. So when he could n't ſtand over me no longer, he holds out his hands again for my money; but he was as cunning as could be, for he would n't ſpeak a word, becauſe I ſhould n't ſwear to his voice; however,

that ſha'nt ſave him, for I'll ſwear to him any day in the year, if I can but catch him. So, when I told him I had no money, he fell to jerking me again, juſt as if he had but that moment begun! And, after that, he got me cloſe by a tree, and out of his pocket he pulls a great cord!—It's a wonder I did not ſwoon away, for as ſure as you're alive, he was going to hang me to that tree. I ſcreamed like any thing mad, and told him if he would but ſpare my life, I'd never proſecute him, nor tell nobody what he'd done to me: ſo he ſtood ſome time, quite in a brown ſtudy, a thinking what he ſhould do. And ſo, after that, he forced me to ſit down in the ditch, and he tied my feet together, juſt as you ſee them, and then, as if he had not done enough, he twitched off my cap, and, without ſaying nothing, got on his horſe, and left me in that condition, thinking, I ſuppoſe, that I might lie there and periſh."

Though this narrative almoſt compelled me to laugh, yet I was really irritated with the Captain, for carrying his love of tormenting,—*ſport*, he calls it,—to ſuch barbarous and unjuſtifiable extremes. I conſoled and ſoothed her as well as I was able, and told her that, ſince M. Du Bois had

eſcaped,

escaped, I hoped when she recovered from her fright, all would end well.

"Fright, child!" repeated she, "why that's not half;—I promise you, I wish it was; but here I'm bruised from top to toe, and it's well if ever I have the right use of my limbs again. However, I'm glad the villain got nothing but his trouble for his pains. But here the worst is to come, for I can't go out, because I've got no curls, and so he'll be escaped, before I can get to the Justice to stop him. I'm resolved I'll tell Lady Howard how her man served me, for if he had n't made me fling 'em away, I dare say I could have pinned them up well enough for the country."

"Perhaps Lady Howard may be able to lend you a cap that will wear without them."

"Lady Howard, indeed! why, do you think I'd wear one of her dowdies? No, I'll promise you, I sha'n't put on no such disguisement. It's the unluckiest thing in the world that I did not make the man pick up the curls again; but he put me in such a passion, I could not think of nothing. I know I can't get none at Howard Grove for love nor money, for of all the stupid places ever I see, that Howard Grove is the worst! there's never no getting nothing one wants."

This ſort of converſation laſted till we arrived at our journey's end; and then, a new diſtreſs occurred; Madame Duval was eager to ſpeak to Lady Howard and Mrs. Mirvan, and to relate her misfortunes, but ſhe could not endure that Sir Clement or the Captain ſhould ſee her in ſuch diſorder, for ſhe ſaid they were ſo ill-natured, that inſtead of pitying her, they would only make a jeſt of her diſaſters. She therefore ſent me firſt into the houſe, to wait for an opportunity of their being out of the way, that ſhe might ſteal up ſtairs unobſerved. In this I ſucceeded, as the gentlemen thought it moſt prudent not to ſeem watching for her; though they both contrived to divert themſelves with peeping at her as ſhe paſſed.

She went immediately to bed, where ſhe had her ſupper. Lady Howard and Mrs. Mirvan both of them very kindly ſat with her, and liſtened to her tale with compaſſionate attention; while Miſs Mirvan and I retired to our own room, where I was very glad to end the troubles of the day in a comfortable converſation.

The Captain's raptures, during ſupper, at the ſucceſs of his plan, were boundleſs. I ſpoke, afterwards, to Mrs. Mirvan, with the openneſs which her kindneſs encourages, and begged her to remonſtrate with him

him upon the cruelty of tormenting Madame Duval ſo cauſeleſsly. She promiſed to take the firſt opportunity of ſtarting the ſubject, but ſaid he was, at preſent, ſo much elated that he would not liſten to her with any patience. However, ſhould he make any new efforts to moleſt her, I can by no means conſent to be paſſive. Had I imagined he would have been ſo violent, I would have riſked his anger in her defence much ſooner.

She has kept her bed all day, and declares ſhe is almoſt bruiſed to death.

Adieu, dear Sir. What a long letter have I written! I could almoſt fancy I ſent it you from London!

LETTER III.

Evelina in continuation.

Howard Grove, May 15th.

THIS inſatiable Captain, if left to himſelf, would not, I believe, reſt, till he had tormented Madame Duval into a fever. He ſeems to have no delight but in terrifying or provoking her, and all his thoughts apparently turn upon inventing

ſuch methods as may do it moſt effectually.

She had her breakfaſt again in bed yeſterday morning; but during ours, the Captain, with a very ſignificant look at Sir Clement, gave us to underſtand, that he thought ſhe had now reſted long enough to bear the hardſhips of a freſh campaign.

His meaning was obvious, and, therefore, I reſolved to endeavour immediately to put a ſtop to his intended exploits. When breakfaſt was over, I followed Mrs. Mirvan out of the parlour, and begged her to loſe no time in pleading the cauſe of Madame Duval with the Captain. "My love," anſwered ſhe, "I have already expoſtulated with him; but all I can ſay is fruitleſs, while his favourite Sir Clement contrives to urge him on."

"Then I will go and ſpeak to Sir Clement," ſaid I, "for I know he will deſiſt, if I requeſt him."

"Have a care, my dear!" ſaid ſhe, ſmiling, "it is ſometimes dangerous to make requeſts to men, who are too deſirous of receiving them."

"Well then, my dear Madam, will you give me leave to ſpeak myſelf to the Captain?"

"Willingly; nay, I will accompany you to him."

I thanked

I thanked her, and we went to ſeek him. He was walking in the garden with Sir Clement. Mrs. Mirvan moſt obligingly made an opening for my purpoſe, by ſaying, "Mr. Mirvan, I have brought a petitioner with me."

"Why what's the matter now?" cried he.

I was fearful of making him angry, and ſtammered very much, when I told him, I hoped he had no new plan for alarming Madame Duval.

"*New* plan!" cried he, "why, you don't ſuppoſe the *old* one would do again, do you? Not but what it was a very good one, only I doubt ſhe would n't bite."

"Indeed, Sir," ſaid I, "ſhe has already ſuffered too much, and I hope you will pardon me, if I take the liberty of telling you, that I think it my duty to do all in my power to prevent her being again ſo much terrified."

A ſullen gloomineſs inſtantly clouded his face, and, turning ſhort from me, he ſaid, I might do as I pleaſed, but that I ſhould much ſooner repent than repair my officiouſneſs.

I was too much diſconcerted at this rebuff, to attempt making any anſwer, and, finding that Sir Clement warmly eſpouſed my cauſe, I walked away, and left them to diſcuſs the point together.

Mrs. Mirvan, who never ſpeaks to the Captain

Captain when he is out of humour, was glad to follow me, and with her usual sweetness, made a thousand apologies for her husband's ill-manners.

When I left her, I went to Madame Duval, who was just risen, and employed in examining the cloaths she had on the day of her ill usage.

"Here's a sight!" cried she. "Come here, child,—only look—*Pardi*, so long as I've lived, I never see so much before! Why, all my things are spoilt, and, what's worse, my sacque was as good as new. Here's the second negligee I've had used in this manner!—I am sure I was a fool to put it on, in such a lonesome place as this; however, if I stay here these ten years, I'll never put on another good gown, that I'm resolved."

"Will you let the maid try if she can iron it out, or clean it, Ma'am?

"No, she'll only make bad worse.—But look here, now, here's a cloak! *Mon Dieu!* why, it looks like a dish-clout! Of all the unluckinesses, that ever I met, this is the worst! for, do you know, I bought it but the day before I left Paris?—Besides, into the bargain, my cap's quite gone; where the villain twitched it, I don't know, but I never see no more of it, from that time to this. Now you must know this was the becomingest cap I had in the world,

world, for I've never another with pink ribbon in it; and, to tell you the truth, if I had n't thought to have ſeen M. Du Bois, I'd no more have put it on than I'd have flown; for as to what one wears in ſuch a ſtupid place as this, it ſignifies no more than nothing at all."

She then told me, that ſhe had been thinking all night of a contrivance to hinder the Captain from finding out her loſs of curls; which was, having a large gauze handkerchief pinned on her head as a hood, and ſaying ſhe had the tooth-ach.

"To tell you the truth," added ſhe, "I believe that Captain is one of the worſt men in the world; he's always making a joke of me; and as to his being a gentleman, he has no more manners than a bear, for he's always upon the grin when one's in diſtreſs; and, I declare, I'd rather be done any thing to than laugh'd at, for, to my mind, it's one or other the diſagreeableſt thing in the world."

Mrs. Mirvan, I found, had been endeavouring to diſſuade her from the deſign ſhe had formed, of having recourſe to the law, in order to find out the ſuppoſed robbers; for ſhe dreads a diſcovery of the Captain, during Madame Duval's ſtay at Howard Grove, as it could not fail being productive of infinite commotion.

tion. She has, therefore, taken great pains to shew the inutility of applying to justice, unless she were more able to describe the offenders against whom she would appear, and has assured her, that as she neither heard their voices, nor saw their faces, she cannot possibly swear to their persons, or obtain any redress.

Madame Duval, in telling me this, extremely lamented her hard fate, that she was thus prevented from revenging her injuries; which, however, she vowed she would not be persuaded to *pocket tamely*, "because," added she, "if such villains as these are let to have their own way, and nobody takes no notice of their impudence, they'll make no more ado than nothing at all of tying people in ditches, and such things as that: however, I shall consult with M. Du Bois, as soon as I can ferret out where he's hid himself. I'm sure I've a right to his advice, for it's all along of his gaping about at the Tower that I've met with these misfortunes."

"M. Du Bois," said I, "will, I am sure, be very sorry when he hears what has happened."

"And what good will that do now?—that won't unspoil all my cloaths; I can tell him, I a'n't much obliged to him, though it's no fault of his;—yet it i'n't the

the leſs provokinger for that. I'm ſure, if he had been there, to have ſeen me ſerved in that manner, and put neck and heels into a ditch, he'd no more have thought it was me, than the Pope of Rome. I'll promiſe you, whatever you may think of it, I ſha'n't have no reſt, night nor day, till I find out that rogue."

"I have no doubt, Madam, but you will ſoon diſcover him."

"*Pardi*, if I do, I'll hang him, as ſure as fate!—but what's the oddeſt, is that he ſhould take ſuch a 'ſpecial ſpite againſt *me*, above all the reſt! it was as much for nothing, as could be, for I don't know what I had done, ſo particular bad, to be uſed in that manner: I'm ſure, I had n't given him no offence, as I know of, for I never ſee his face all the time; and as to ſcreaming a little, I think it's very hard if one muſt n't do ſuch a thing as that, when one's put in fear of one's life."

During this converſation, ſhe endeavoured to adjuſt her head-dreſs, but could not at all pleaſe herſelf. Indeed, had I not been preſent, I ſhould have thought it impoſſible for a woman at her time of life to be ſo very difficult in regard to dreſs. What ſhe may have in view, I cannot imagine, but the labour of the toilette ſeems the chief buſineſs of her life.

When

When I left her, in my way down ſtairs, I met Sir Clement, who, with great earneſtneſs, ſaid he muſt not be denied the honour of a moment's converſation with me; and then, without waiting for an anſwer, he led me to the garden, at the door of which, however, I abſolutely inſiſted upon ſtopping.

He ſeemed very ſerious, and ſaid, in a grave tone of voice, "At length, Miſs Anville, I flatter myſelf I have hit upon an expedient that will oblige you, and therefore, though it is death to myſelf, I will put it in practice."

I begged him to explain himſelf.

"I ſaw your deſire of ſaving Madame Duval, and ſcarce could I refrain giving the brutal Captain my real opinion of his ſavage conduct; but I am unwilling to quarrel with him, leſt I ſhould be denied entrance into a houſe which you inhabit: I have been endeavouring to prevail with him to give up his abſurd new ſcheme, but I find him impenetrable:—I have therefore determined to make a pretence for ſuddenly leaving this place, dear as it is to me, and containing all I moſt admire and adore;—and I will ſtay in town till the violence of this boobyiſh humour is abated."

He ſtopped; but I was ſilent, for I knew not what I ought to ſay. He took my hand,

hand, which he preſſed to his lips, ſaying, "And muſt I, then, Miſs Anville, muſt I quit you—ſacrifice voluntarily my greateſt felicity,—and yet not be honoured with one word, one look of approbation?"

I withdrew my hand, and ſaid, with a half laugh, "You know ſo well, Sir Clement, the value of the favours you confer, that it would be ſuperfluous for me to point it out"

"Charming, charming girl! how does your wit, your underſtanding riſe upon me daily! and muſt I, can I part with you?—will no other method—"

"O Sir, do you ſo ſoon repent the good office you had planned for Madame Duval?"

"For Madame Duval!—cruel creature, and will you not even ſuffer me to place to your account the ſacrifice I am about to make?"

"You muſt place it, Sir, to what account you pleaſe; but I am too much in haſte now to ſtay here any longer."

And then I would have left him, but he held me, and, rather impatiently, ſaid, "If, then, I cannot be ſo happy as to oblige *you*, Miſs Anville, you muſt not be ſurpriſed, ſhould I ſeek to oblige myſelf. If my ſcheme is not honoured with your approbation, for which alone it was formed,

ed, why ſhould I, to my own infinite diſ-ſatisfaction, purſue it?"

We were then, for a few minutes, both ſilent; I was really unwilling he ſhould give up a plan which would ſo effectually break into the Captain's deſigns, and, at the ſame time, ſave me the pain of diſo-bliging him; and I ſhould inſtantly and thankfully have accepted his offered civi-lity, had not Mrs. Mirvan's caution made me fearful. However, when he preſſed me to ſpeak, I ſaid, in an ironical voice, "I had thought, Sir, that the very ſtrong ſenſe you have yourſelf of the favour you propoſe to me, would ſufficiently have re-paid you, but, as I was miſtaken, I muſt thank you myſelf. And now," making a low court'ſy, "I hope, Sir, you are ſa-tisfied."

"Lovelieſt of thy ſex—" he began, but I forced myſelf from him, and ran up ſtairs.

Soon after, Miſs Mirvan told me that Sir Clement had juſt received a letter, which obliged him inſtantly to leave the Grove, and that he had actually ordered a chaiſe. I then acquainted her with the real ſtate of the affair. Indeed, I conceal nothing from her; ſhe is ſo gentle and ſweet-tempered, that it gives me great pleaſure to place an entire confidence in her.

At dinner, I must own, we all missed him; for though the flightiness of his behaviour to me, when we are by ourselves, is very distressing, yet, in large companies, and general conversation, he is extremely entertaining and agreeable. As to the Captain, he has been so much chagrined at his departure, that he has scarce spoken a word since he went: but Madame Duval, who made her first public appearance since her accident, was quite in raptures that she escaped seeing him.

The money, which we left at the farm-house, has been returned to us. What pains the Captain must have taken to arrange and manage the adventures which he chose we should meet with! Yet he must certainly be discovered, for Madame Duval is already very much perplexed, at having received a letter this morning from M. Du Bois, in which he makes no mention of his imprisonment. However, she has so little suspicion, that she imputes his silence upon the subject, to his fears that the letter might be intercepted.

Not one opportunity could I meet with, while Sir Clement was here, to enquire after his friend Lord Orville: but I think it was strange he should never mention him unasked. Indeed, I rather wonder that Mrs. Mirvan herself did not introduce the subject,

subject, for she always seemed particularly attentive to him.

And now, once more, all my thoughts involuntarily turn upon the letter I so soon expect from Paris. This visit of Sir Clement has, however, somewhat diverted my fears, and therefore I am very glad he made it at this time. Adieu, my dear Sir.

LETTER IV.

Sir John Belmont to Lady Howard.

Paris, May 11.

Madam,

I Have this moment the honour of your Ladyship's letter, and I will not wait another, before I return an answer.

It seldom happens that a man, though extolled as a saint, is really without blemish; or that another, though reviled as a devil, is really without humanity. Perhaps the time is not very distant, when I may have the honour to convince your Ladyship of this truth, in regard to Mr. Villars and myself.

As to the young lady, whom Mr. Villars so obligingly proposes presenting to me, I wish her all the happiness to which, by your

Ladyship's

Ladyſhip's account, ſhe ſeems entitled; and, if ſhe has a third part of the merit of *her* to whom you compare her, I doubt not but Mr. Villars will be more ſucceſsful in every other application he may make for her advantage, than he can ever be in any with which he may be pleaſed to favour me.

I have the honour to be,
Madam,
your Ladyſhip's moſt humble
and moſt obedient ſervant,
JOHN BELMONT.

LETTER V.

Evelina to the Rev. Mr. Villars.

Howard Grove, May 18.

WELL, my dear Sir, all is now over! the letter ſo anxiouſly expected, is at length arrived, and my doom is fixed. The various feelings which oppreſs me, I have not language to deſcribe; nor need I,—you know my heart, you have yourſelf formed it,—and its ſenſations upon this occaſion, you may but too readily imagine.

Outcaſt as I am, and rejected for ever by him to whom I of right belong,—ſhall I now implore *your* continued protection?—no, no,—I will not offend your generous heart, which, open to diſtreſs, has no wiſh but to relieve it, with an application that would ſeem to imply a doubt. I am more ſecure than ever of your kindneſs, ſince you now know upon that is my ſole dependance.

I endeavour to bear this ſtroke with compoſure, and in ſuch a manner as if I had already received your counſel and conſolation. Yet, at times, my emotions are almoſt too much for me. O Sir, what a letter for a parent to write! muſt I not myſelf be deaf to the voice of Nature, if I could endure to be thus abſolutely abandoned, without regret? I dare not even to you, nor would I, could I help it, to myſelf, acknowledge all that I think; for, indeed, I have, ſometimes, ſentiments upon this rejection, which my ſtrongeſt ſenſe of duty can ſcarcely correct. Yet, ſuffer me to aſk, —might not this anſwer have been ſoftened?—was it not enough to diſclaim me for ever, without treating me with contempt, and wounding me with deriſion?

But, while I am thus thinking of myſelf, I forget how much more he is the object of ſorrow, than I am! Alas, what amends can

he

he make himself, for the anguish he is hoarding up for time to come! My heart bleeds for him, whenever this reflection occurs to me.

What is said of *you*, my protector, my friend, my benefactor!—I dare not trust myself to comment upon. Gracious Heaven! what a return for goodness so unparalleled!

I would fain endeavour to divert my thoughts from this subject, but even that is not in my power; for, afflicting as this letter is to me, I find that it will not be allowed to conclude the affair, though it does all my expectations: for Madame Duval has determined not to let it rest here. She heard the letter in great wrath, and protested she would not be so easily answered; she regretted her facility in having been prevailed upon to yield the direction of this affair to those who knew not how to manage it, and vowed she would herself undertake and conduct it in future.

It is in vain that I have pleaded against her resolution, and besought her to forbear an attack, where she has nothing to expect but resentment; especially as there seems to be a hint, that Lady Howard will one day be more openly dealt with: she will not hear me; she is furiously bent upon a project which is terrible to think of,—for she

means to go herſelf to Paris, take me with her, and there, *face to face*, demand juſtice!

How to appeaſe or to perſuade her, I know not; but for the univerſe would I not be dragged, in ſuch a manner, to an interview ſo awful, with a parent I have never yet beheld!

Lady Howard and Mrs. Mirvan are both of them infinitely ſhocked at the preſent ſituation of affairs, and they ſeem to be even more kind to me than ever; and my dear Maria, who is the friend of my heart, uſes her utmoſt efforts to conſole me, and, when ſhe fails in her deſign, with ſtill greater kindneſs, ſhe ſympathiſes in my ſorrow.

I very much rejoice, however, that Sir Clement Willoughby had left us before this letter arrived. I am ſure the general confuſion of the houſe would, otherwiſe, have betrayed to him the whole of a tale which I now, more than ever, wiſh to have buried in oblivion.

Lady Howard thinks I ought not to diſoblige Madame Duval, yet ſhe acknowledges the impropriety of my accompanying her abroad upon ſuch an enterprize. Indeed I would rather die, than force myſelf into his preſence. But ſo vehement is Madame Duval, that ſhe would inſtantly have compelled me to attend her to town, in her way to Paris, had not Lady Howard ſo far

exerted herself, as to declare she could by no means consent to my quitting her house, till she gave me up to you, by whose permission I had entered it.

She was extremely angry at this denial; and the Captain, by his sneers and raillery, so much encreased her rage, that she has positively declared, should your next letter dispute her authority to guide me by her own pleasure, she will, without hesitation, make a journey to Berry Hill, and *teach you to know who she is.*

Should she put this threat in execution, nothing could give me greater uneasiness, for her violence and volubility would almost distract you.

Unable as I am to act for myself, or to judge what conduct I ought to pursue, how grateful do I feel myself, that I have such a guide and director to counsel and instruct me as yourself!

Adieu, my dearest Sir! Heaven, I trust, will never let me live to be repulsed and derided by *you*, to whom I may now sign myself

Wholly your
EVELINA.

LETTER VI.

Mr. Villars to Evelina.

Berry Hill, May 21.

LET not my Evelina be depreſſed by a ſtroke of fortune for which ſhe is not reſponſible. No breach of duty on your part, has incurred the unkindneſs which has been ſhewn you; nor have you, by any act of imprudence, provoked either cenſure or reproach. Let me entreat you, therefore, my deareſt child, to ſupport yourſelf with that courage which your innocency ought to inſpire; and let all the affliction you allow yourſelf, be for him only, who, not having that ſupport, muſt one day be but too ſeverely ſenſible how much he wants it.

The hint thrown out concerning myſelf, is wholly unintelligible to me: my heart, I dare own, fully acquits me of vice, but *without blemiſh*, I have never ventured to pronounce myſelf. However, it ſeems his intention to be hereafter more explicit, and *then*,—ſhould any thing appear, that has on *my* part, contributed to thoſe misfortunes we lament, let me, at leaſt, ſay, that the moſt partial of my friends cannot be ſo much

much aſtoniſhed as I ſhall myſelf be, at ſuch a diſcovery.

The mention, alſo, of any *future applications* I may make, is equally beyond my comprehenſion. But I will not dwell upon a ſubject which almoſt compels from me reflections that cannot but be wounding to a heart ſo formed for filial tenderneſs as my Evelina's. There is an air of myſtery throughout the letter, the explanation of which I will await in ſilence.

The ſcheme of Madame Duval is ſuch as might be reaſonably expected from a woman ſo little inured to diſappointment, and ſo totally incapable of conſidering the delicacy of your ſituation. Your averſeneſs to her plan gives me pleaſure, for it exactly correſponds with my own. Why will ſhe not make the journey ſhe projects by herſelf? She would not have even the wiſh of an oppoſition to encounter. And then, once more, might my child and myſelf be left to the quiet enjoyment of that peaceful happineſs, which ſhe alone has interrupted. As to her coming hither, I could, indeed, diſpenſe with ſuch a viſit; but, if ſhe will not be ſatisfied with my refuſal by letter, I muſt ſubmit to the taſk of giving it her in perſon.

My impatience for your return is encreaſed by your account of Sir Clement

Willoughby's visit to Howard Grove. I am but little surprised at the perseverance of his assiduities to interest you in his favour; but I am very much hurt that you should be exposed to addresses, which, by their privacy, have an air that shocks me. You cannot, my love, be too circumspect; the slightest carelessness on your part, will be taken advantage of, by a man of his disposition. It is not sufficient for you to be reserved; his conduct even calls for your resentment: and should he again, as will doubtless be his endeavour, contrive to solicit your favour in private, let your disdain and displeasure be so marked, as to constrain a change in his behaviour. Though, indeed, should his visit be repeated while you remain at the Grove, Lady Howard must pardon me if I shorten your's.

Adieu, my child. You will always make my respects to the hospitable family to which we are so much obliged.

LETTER

LETTER VII.

Mr. Villars to Lady Howard.

Berry Hill, May 27.

Dear Madam,

I Believe your Ladyship will not be surprised at hearing I have had a visit from Madame Duval, as I doubt not her having made known her intention before she left Howard Grove. I would gladly have excused myself this meeting, could I have avoided it decently; but, after so long a journey, it was not possible to refuse her admittance.

She told me, that she came to Berry Hill, in consequence of a letter I had sent to her grand-daughter, in which I had forbid her going to Paris. Very roughly, she then called me to account for the authority which I assumed; and, had I been disposed to have argued with her, she would very angrily have disputed the right by which I used it. But I declined all debating. I therefore listened very quietly, till she had so much fatigued herself with talking, that she was glad, in her turn, to be silent. And then, I begged to know the purport of her visit.

She answered, that she came to make me relinquish the power I had usurped over her grand-daughter, and assured me she would not quit the place till she succeeded.

But I will not trouble your Ladyship with the particulars of this disagreeable conversation; nor should I, but on account of the result, have chosen so unpleasant a subject for your perusal. However, I will be as concise as I possibly can, that the better occupations of your Ladyship's time may be the less impeded.

When she found me inexorable in refusing Evelina's attending her to Paris, she peremptorily insisted, that she should, at least, live with her in London, till Sir John Belmont's return. I remonstrated against this scheme with all the energy in my power; but the contest was vain; she lost her patience, and I my time. She declared that if I was resolute in opposing her, she would instantly make a will, in which she would leave all her fortune to strangers, though, otherwise, she intended her grand-daughter for her sole heiress.

To me, I own, this threat seemed of little consequence; I have long accustomed myself to think, that, with a competency, of which she is sure, my child might be as happy as in the possession of millions: but the incertitude of her future fate deters me

from

from following implicitly the dictates of my present judgment. The connections she may hereafter form, the stile of life for which she may be destined, and the future family to which she may belong, are considerations which give but too much weight to the menaces of Madame Duval. In short, Madam, after a discourse infinitely tedious, I was obliged, though very reluctantly, to compromise with this ungovernable woman, by consenting that Evelina should pass one month with her.

I never made a concession with so bad a grace, or so much regret. The violence and vulgarity of this woman, her total ignorance of propriety, the family to which she is related, and the company she is likely to keep, are objections so forcible to her having the charge of this dear child, that nothing less than my diffidence of the right I have of depriving her of so large a fortune, would have induced me to listen to her proposal. Indeed we parted, at last, equally discontented, she, at what I had refused, I, at what I had granted.

It now only remains for me to return your Ladyship my humble acknowledgements for the kindness which you have so liberally shewn to my ward: and to beg you would have the goodness to part with her, when Madame Duval thinks proper

to claim the promiſe which ſhe has extorted from me. I am,

Dear Madam, &c.

ARTHUR VILLARS.

LETTER VIII.

Mr. Villars to Evelina.

Berry Hill, May 28.

WITH a reluctance which occaſions me inexpreſſible uneaſineſs, I have been almoſt compelled to conſent that my Evelina ſhould quit the protection of the hoſpitable and reſpectable Lady Howard, and accompany Madame Duval to a city which I had hoped ſhe would never again have entered. But alas, my dear child, we are the ſlaves of cuſtom, the dupes of prejudice, and dare not ſtem the torrent of an oppoſing world, even though our judgments condemn our compliance! however, ſince the die is caſt, we muſt endeavour to make the beſt of it.

You will have occaſion, in the courſe of the month you are to paſs with Madame Duval, for all the circumſpection and prudence you can call to your aid: ſhe will not,

not, I know, propose any thing to you which she thinks wrong herself; but you must learn not only to *judge* but to *act* for yourself: if any schemes are started, any engagements made, which your understanding represents to you as improper, exert yourself resolutely in avoiding them, and do not, by a too passive facility, risk the censure of the world, or your own future regret.

You cannot too assiduously attend to Madame Duval herself; but I would wish you to mix as little as possible with her associates, who are not likely to be among those whose acquaintance would reflect credit upon you. Remember, my dear Evelina, nothing is so delicate as the reputation of a woman: it is, at once, the most beautiful and most brittle of all human things.

Adieu, my beloved child; I shall be but ill at ease till this month is elapsed.

A. V.

LETTER

LETTER IX.

Evelina to the Rev. Mr. Villars.

London, June 6.

ONCE more, my deareſt Sir, I write to you from this great city. Yeſterday morning, with the trueſt concern, I quitted the dear inhabitants of Howard Grove, and moſt impatiently ſhall I count the days till I ſee them again. Lady Howard and Mrs. Mirvan took leave of me with the moſt flattering kindneſs; but indeed I knew not how to part with Maria, whoſe own apparent ſorrow redoubled mine. She made me promiſe to ſend her a letter every poſt. And I ſhall write to her with the ſame freedom, and almoſt the ſame confidence, you allow me to make uſe of to yourſelf.

The Captain was very civil to me, but he wrangled with poor Madame Duval to the laſt moment; and, taking me aſide, juſt before we got into the chaiſe, he ſaid, "Hark'ee, Miſs Anville, I've a favour for to aſk of you, which is this; that you will write us word how the old gentlewoman finds herſelf, when ſhe ſees it was all a trick: and what the French lubber ſays to it, and all about it."

I an-

I answered that I would obey him, though I was very little pleased with the commission, which, to me, was highly improper; but he will either treat me as an *informer*, or make me a party in his frolic.

As soon as we drove away, Madame Duval, with much satisfaction, exclaimed "*Dieu merci*, we've got off at last! I'm sure I never desire to see that place again. It's a wonder I've got away alive; for I believe I've had the worst luck ever was known, from the time I set my foot upon the threshold. I know I wish I'd never a gone. Besides, into the bargain, it's the most dullest place in all Christendom: there's never no diversions, nor nothing at all."

Then she bewailed M. Du Bois, concerning whose adventures she continued to make various conjectures during the rest of our journey.

When I asked her what part of London she should reside in, she told me that Mr. Branghton was to meet us at an inn, and would conduct us to a lodging. Accordingly, we proceeded to a house in Bishopsgate-street, and were led by a waiter into a room where we found Mr. Branghton.

He received us very civilly, but seemed rather surprised at seeing me, saying, "Why I did

I did n't think of your bringing Miſs; however ſhe's very welcome."

"I'll tell you how it was," ſaid Madame Duval; "you muſt know I've a mind to take the girl to Paris, that ſhe may ſee ſomething of the world, and improve herſelf a little; beſides, I've another reaſon, that you and I will talk more about; but do you know, that meddling old parſon as I told you of, would not let her go: however, I'm reſolved I'll be even with him, for I ſhall take her on with me, without ſaying never a word more to nobody."

I ſtarted at this intimation, which very much ſurpriſed me. But I am very glad ſhe has diſcovered her intention, as I ſhall be carefully upon my guard not to venture from town with her.

Mr. Branghton then hoped we had paſſed our time agreeably in the country.

"O Lord, Couſin," cried ſhe, "I've been the miſerableſt creature in the world! I'm ſure all the horſes in London ſha'n't drag me into the country again of one while: why how do you think I've been ſerved?—only gueſs."

"Indeed, Couſin, I can't pretend to do that."

"Why then I'll tell you. Do you know, I've been robbed!—that is, the villain

villain would have robbed me if he could, only I'd secured all my money."

"Why then, Cousin, I think your loss can't have been very great."

"O Lord, you don't know what you're a saying; you're talking in the unthinkingest manner in the world: why it was all along of not having no money, that I met with that misfortune."

"How's that, Cousin? I don't see what great misfortune you can have met with, if you'd secured all your money."

"That's because you don't know nothing of the matter; for there the villain came to the chaise, and because we had n't got nothing to give him, though he'd no more right to our money than the man in the moon, yet, do you know, he fell into the greatest passion ever you see, and abused me in such a manner, and put me in a ditch, and got a rope, o' purpose to hang me,—and I'm sure, if that was n't misfortune enough, why I don't know what is."

"This is a hard case indeed, Cousin. But why don't you go to Justice Fielding?"

"O, as to that, I'm a going to him directly; but only I want first to see poor M. Du Bois, for the oddest thing of all is, that he has wrote to me, and never said nothing of where he is, nor what's become of him, nor nothing else."

"M. Du

"M. Du Bois! why he's at my house at this very time."

"M. Du Bois at your house! well, I declare this is the surprisingest part of all! however, I assure you, I think he might have comed for me, as well as you, considering what I have gone through on his account; for, to tell you the truth, it was all along of him that I met with that accident; so I don't take it very kind of him, I promise you."

"Well but, Cousin, tell me some of the particulars of this affair."

"As to the particulars, I'm sure they'd make your hair stand an end to hear them; however, the beginning of it all was through the fault of M. Du Bois: but I'll assure you, he may take care of himself in future, since he don't so much as come to see if I'm dead or alive;—but there I went for him to a justice of peace, and rode all out of the way, and did every thing in the world, and was used worser than a dog, and all for the sake of serving of him, and now, you see, he don't so much—well, I was a fool for my pains,—however, he may get somebody else to be treated so another time, for if he's taken up every day in the week, I'll never go after him no more."

This occasioned an explanation, in the course of which Madame Duval, to her utter

utter amazement, heard that M. Du Bois had never left London during her absence! nor did Mr. Branghton believe that he had ever been to the Tower, or met with any kind of accident.

Almost instantly, the whole truth of the transaction seemed to *rush upon her mind*, and her wrath was inconceivably violent. She asked me a thousand questions in a breath, but, fortunately, was too vehement to attend to my embarrassment, which must, otherwise, have betrayed my knowledge of the deceit. Revenge was her first wish, and she vowed she would go the next morning to Justice Fielding, and enquire what punishment she might lawfully inflict upon the Captain for his assault.

I believe we were an hour in Bishopsgate-street, before poor Madame Duval could allow any thing to be mentioned but her own story; at length, however, Mr. Branghton told her, that M. Du Bois, and all his own family, were waiting for her at his house. A hackney-coach was then called, and we proceeded to Snow-hill.

Mr. Branghton's house is small and inconvenient, though his shop, which takes in all the ground floor, is large and commodious. I believe I told you before that he is a silver-smith.

We

We were conducted up two pair of ſtairs; for the dining-room, Mr. Branghton told us was *let*. His two daughters, their brother, M. Du Bois, and a young man, were at tea. They had waited ſome time for Madame Duval, but I found they had not any expectation that I ſhould accompany her; and the young ladies, I believe, were rather more ſurpriſed than pleaſed when I made my appearance; for they ſeemed hurt that I ſhould ſee their apartment. Indeed I would willingly have ſaved them that pain, had it been in my power.

The firſt perſon who ſaw me was M. Du Bois: "*Ah, Mon Dieu!* exclaimed he, "*voilà Mademoiſelle!*"

"Goodneſs," cried young Branghton, "if there is n't Miſs!"

"Lord, ſo there is," ſaid Miſs Polly; "well, I'm ſure I ſhould never have dreamed of Miſs's coming."

"Nor I neither, I'm ſure," cried Miſs Branghton, "or elſe I would not have been in this room to ſee her; I'm quite aſhamed about it,—only not thinking of ſeeing any body but my aunt—however, Tom, it's all your fault, for you know very well I wanted to borrow Mr. Smith's room, only you were ſo *grumpy* you would not let me."

"Lord,

"Lord, what ſignifies?" ſaid the brother, "I dare be ſworn Miſs has been up two pair of ſtairs before now;—Ha'n't you, Miſs?"

I begged that I might not give them the leaſt diſturbance, and aſſured them that I had not any choice in regard to what room we ſat in.

"Well," ſaid Miſs Polly, "when you come next, Miſs, we'll have Mr. Smith's room; and it's a very pretty one, and only up one pair of ſtairs, and nicely furniſhed, and every thing."

"To ſay the truth," ſaid Miſs Branghton, "I thought that my couſin would not, upon any account, have come to town in the ſummer-time; for it's not at all the *faſhion*,—ſo, to be ſure, thinks I, ſhe'll ſtay till September, when the play-houſes open."

This was my reception, which I believe you will not call a very *cordial* one. Madame Duval, who, after having ſeverely reprimanded M. Du Bois for his negligence, was juſt entering upon the ſtory of her misfortunes, now wholly engaged the company.

M. Du Bois liſtened to her with a look of the utmoſt horror, repeatedly lifting up his eyes and hands, and exclaiming, "*O ciel! quel barbare!*" The young ladies gave her

her the most earnest attention; but their brother, and the young man, kept a broad grin upon their faces during the whole recital. She was, however, too much engaged to observe them: but, when she mentioned having been tied in a ditch, young Branghton, no longer able to constrain himself, burst into a loud laugh, declaring that he had never heard any thing so *funny* in his life! His laugh was heartily re-echoed by his friend; the Miss Branghtons could not resist the example; and poor Madame Duval, to her extreme amazement, was absolutely overpowered and stopped by the violence of their mirth.

For some minutes the room seemed quite in an uproar; the rage of Madame Duval, the astonishment of M. Du Bois, and the angry interrogatories of Mr. Branghton, on one side; the convulsive tittering of the sisters, and the loud laughs of the young men, on the other, occasioned such noise, passion, and confusion, that had any one stopped an instant on the stairs, he must have concluded himself in Bedlam. At length, however, the father brought them to order; and, half-laughing, half-frightened, they made Madame Duval some very awkward apologies. But she would not be prevailed upon to continue her narrative,

till they had proteſted they were laughing at the Captain, and not at her. Appeaſed by this, ſhe reſumed her ſtory; which, by the help of ſtuffing handkerchiefs into their mouths, the young people heard with tolerable decency.

Every body agreed, that the ill uſage the Captain had given her was *actionable*, and Mr. Branghton ſaid he was ſure ſhe might recover what damages ſhe pleaſed, ſince ſhe had been put in fear of her life.

She then, with great delight declared, that ſhe would loſe no time in ſatisfying her revenge, and vowed ſhe would not be contented with leſs than half his fortune: "For though," ſaid ſhe, "I don't put no value upon the money, becauſe, *Dieu merci*, I ha'n't no want of it, yet I don't wiſh for nothing ſo much as to puniſh that fellow; for, I'm ſure, whatever's the cauſe of it, he owes me a great *grudge*, and I know no more what it's for than you do, but he's always been doing me one ſpite or other, ever ſince I knew him."

Soon after tea, Miſs Branghton took an opportunity to tell me, in a whiſper, that the young man I ſaw was a lover of her ſiſter's, that his name was Brown, and that he was a haberdaſher, with many other particulars of his circumſtances and family; and then ſhe declared her utter averſion to the

the thoughts of such a match; but added, that her sister had no manner of spirit or ambition, though, for her part, she would ten times rather die an old maid, than marry any person but a gentleman. "And, for that matter," added she, "I believe Polly herself don't care much for him, only she's in such a hurry, because, I suppose, she's a mind to be married before me; however, she's very welcome, for, I'm sure, I don't care a pin's point whether I ever marry at all;—it's all one to me."

Some time after this, Miss Polly contrived to tell *her* story. She assured me, with much tittering, that her sister was in a great fright, lest she should be married first, "So I make her believe that I will," continued she, "for I love dearly to plague her a little; though, I declare, I don't intend to have Mr. Brown in reality; I'm sure I don't like him half well enough,—do you, Miss?"

"It is not possible for me to judge of his merits," said I, "as I am entirely a stranger to him."

"But what do you think of him, Miss?"

"Why, really, I—I don't know—"

"But do you think him handsome? Some people reckon him to have a good pretty person,—but, I'm sure, for my part, I think

I think he's monſtrous ugly :—don't *you*, Miſs ?"

"I am no judge,—but I think his perſon is very—very well."

"*Very well !*—Why, pray, Miſs," in a tone of vexation, "what fault can you find with it ?"

"O, none at all !"

"I'm ſure you muſt be very ill-natured if you could. Now there's Biddy ſays ſhe thinks nothing of him,—but I know it's all out of ſpite. You muſt know, Miſs, it makes her as mad as can be, that I ſhould have a lover before her ; but ſhe's ſo proud that nobody will court her, and I often tell her ſhe'll die an old maid. But, the thing is, ſhe has taken it into her head, to have a liking for Mr. Smith, as lodges on the firſt floor ; but, Lord, he'll never have her, for he's quite a fine gentleman ; and beſides, Mr. Brown heard him ſay, one day, that he'd never marry as long as he lived, for he'd no opinion of matrimony."

"And did you tell your ſiſter this ?"

"O, to be ſure, I told her directly ; but ſhe did not mind me ; however, if ſhe will be a fool, ſhe muſt."

This extreme want of affection, and good-nature, increaſed the diſtaſte I already felt for theſe unamiable ſiſters ; and a confidence ſo entirely unſolicited and unneceſſary, ma-

 niſeſted

nifested equally their folly and their want of decency.

I was very glad when the time for our departing arrived. Mr. Branghton said our lodgings were in Holborn, that we might be near his house, and neighbourly. He accompanied us to them himself.

Our rooms are large, and not inconvenient; our landlord is an hosier. I am sure I have a thousand reasons to rejoice that I am so little known; for my present situation is, in every respect, very unenviable; and I would not, for the world, be seen by any acquaintance of Mrs. Mirvan.

This morning Madame Duval, attended by all the Branghtons, actually went to a Justice in the neighbourhood, to report the Captain's ill usage of her. I had great difficulty in excusing myself from being of the party, which would have given me very serious concern. Indeed, I was extremely anxious, though at home, till I heard the result of the application; for I dread to think of the uneasiness which such an affair would occasion the amiable Mrs. Mirvan. But, fortunately, Madame Duval has received very little encouragement to proceed in her design, for she has been informed that, as she neither heard the voice, nor saw the face of the person suspected, she will find it difficult to cast him upon *conjecture*,

jecture, and will have but little probability of gaining her cause, unless she can procure witnesses of the transaction. Mr. Branghton, therefore, who has considered all the circumstances of the affair, is of opinion, that the law-suit will not only be expensive, but tedious and hazardous, and has advised against it. Madame Duval, though very unwillingly, has acquiesced in his decision; but vows that if ever she is so affronted again, she will be revenged, even if she ruins herself. I am extremely glad that this ridiculous adventure seems now likely to end without more serious consequences.

Adieu, my dearest Sir. My direction is at Mr. Dawkins's, a hosier in High Holborn.

LETTER X.

Evelina to Miss Mirvan.

June 7th.

I HAVE no words, my sweet friend, to express the thankfulness I feel for the unbounded kindness which you, your dear mother, and the much-honoured Lady Howard,

ward, have ſhewn me; and ſtill leſs can I find language to tell you with what reluctance I parted from ſuch dear and generous friends, whoſe goodneſs reflects, at once, ſo much honour on their own hearts, and on her to whom it has been ſo liberally beſtowed. But I will not repeat what I have already written to the kind Mrs. Mirvan; I will remember your admonitions, and confine to my own breaſt that gratitude with which you have filled it, and teach my pen to dwell upon ſubjects leſs painful to my generous correſpondent.

O Maria, London now ſeems no longer the ſame place where I lately enjoyed ſo much happineſs; every thing is new and ſtrange to me; even the town itſelf has not the ſame aſpect:—my ſituation ſo altered! my home ſo different!—my companions ſo changed!—But you well know my averſeneſs to this journey.

Indeed, to me, London now ſeems a deſart; that gay and buſy appearance it ſo lately wore, is now ſucceeded by a look of gloom, fatigue, and laſſitude; the air ſeems ſtagnant, the heat is intenſe, the duſt intolerable, and the inhabitants illiterate and under-bred. At leaſt, ſuch is the face of things in the part of the town where I at preſent reſide.

Tell me, my dear Maria, do you never re-trace

re-trace in your memory the time we paſſed here when together? to mine, it recurs for ever! And yet, I think I rather recollect a dream, or ſome viſionary fancy, than a reality.—That I ſhould ever have been known to Lord Orville,—that I ſhould have ſpoken to—have danced with him,—ſeems now a romantic illuſion: and that elegant politeneſs, that flattering attention, that high-bred delicacy, which ſo much diſtinguiſhed him above all other men, and which ſtruck us with ſuch admiration, I now re-trace the remembrance of, rather as belonging to an object of ideal perfection, formed by my own imagination, than to a being of the ſame race and nature as thoſe with whom I at preſent converſe.

I have no news for you, my dear Miſs Mirvan; for all that I could venture to ſay of Madame Duval, I have already written to your ſweet mother; and as to adventures, I have none to record. Situated as I now am, I heartily hope I ſhall not meet with any; my wiſh is to remain quiet and unnoticed.

Adieu! excuſe the gravity of this letter, and believe me,

Your moſt ſincerely
affectionate and obliged
EVELINA ANVILLE.

LETTER XI.

Evelina to the Rev. Mr. Villars.

Holborn, June 9.

YESTERDAY morning, we received an invitation to dine and ſpend the day at Mr. Branghton's; and M. Du Bois, who was alſo invited, called to conduct us to Snow-hill.

Young Branghton received us at the door, and the firſt words he ſpoke were, "Do you know, Siſters a'n't dreſſed yet?"

Then, hurrying us into the houſe, he ſaid to me, "Come, Miſs, you ſhall go up ſtairs and catch 'em,—I dare ſay they're at the glaſs."

He would have taken my hand, but I declined this civility, and begged to follow Madame Duval. Mr. Branghton then appeared, and led the way himſelf. We went, as before, up two pair of ſtairs; but the moment the father opened the door, the daughters both gave a loud ſcream. We all ſtopped, and then Miſs Branghton called out, "Lord, Papa, what do you bring the company up here for? why, Polly and I a'n't half dreſſed."

"More ſhame for you," anſwered he, "here's

"here's your aunt, and couſin, and M. Du Bois, all waiting, and ne'er a room to take them to."

"Who'd have thought of their coming ſo ſoon?" cried ſhe: "I'm ſure for my part I thought Miſs was uſed to nothing but quality hours."

"Why, I ſha'n't be ready this half-hour yet," ſaid Miſs Polly; "can't they ſtay in the ſhop, till we're dreſſed?"

Mr. Branghton was very angry, and ſcolded them violently; however, we were obliged to deſcend, and ſtools were procured for us in the ſhop, where we found the brother, who was highly delighted, he ſaid, that his ſiſters had been *catched*; and he thought proper to entertain me with a long account of their tediouſneſs, and the many quarrels they all had together.

When, at length, theſe ladies were equipped to their ſatisfaction, they made their appearance; but before any converſation was ſuffered to paſs between them and us, they had a long and moſt diſagreeable dialogue with their father, to whoſe reprimands, though ſo juſtly incurred, they replied with the utmoſt pertneſs and rudeneſs, while their brother, all the time, laughed aloud.

The moment they perceived this, they were ſo much provoked, that, inſtead of

making any apologies to Madame Duval, they next began a quarrel with him.

"Tom, what do you laugh for? I wonder what buſineſs you have to be always a laughing when Papa ſcolds us."

"Then what buſineſs have you to be ſuch a while getting on your cloaths? You're never ready, you know well enough."

"Lord, Sir, I wonder what's that to you! I wiſh you'd mind your own affairs, and not trouble yourſelf about ours. How ſhould a boy like you know any thing?"

"A boy, indeed! not ſuch a boy, neither; I'll warrant you'll be glad to be as young, when you come to be old maids."

This ſort of dialogue we were amuſed with till dinner was ready, when we again mounted up two pair of ſtairs.

In our way, Miſs Polly told me that her ſiſter had aſked Mr. Smith for his room to dine in, but he had refuſed to lend it; "becauſe," ſhe ſaid, "one day it happened to be a little greaſed: however, we ſhall have it to drink tea in, and then, perhaps, you may ſee him, and I aſſure you he's quite like one of the quality, and dreſſes as fine, and goes to balls and dances, and every thing quite in taſte;—and beſides, Miſs, he keeps a foot-boy of his own, too."

The dinner was ill-ſerved, ill-cooked, and

and ill-managed. The maid who waited had so often to go down stairs for something that was forgotten, that the Branghtons were perpetually obliged to rise from table themselves, to get plates, knives and forks, bread or beer. Had they been without *pretensions*, all this would have seemed of no consequence; but they aimed at appearing to advantage, and even fancied they succeeded. However, the most disagreeable part of our fare was, that the whole family continually disputed whose turn it was to rise, and whose to be allowed to sit still.

When this meal was over, Madame Duval, ever eager to discourse upon *her travels*, entered into an argument with Mr. Branghton, and in broken English, M. Du Bois, concerning the French nation: and Miss Polly, then addressing herself to me, said, "Don't you think, Miss, it's very dull sitting up stairs here? we'd better go down *to shop*, and then we shall see the people go by."

"Lord, Poll," said the Brother "you're always wanting to be staring and gaping; and I'm sure you need n't be so fond of shewing yourself, for you're ugly enough to frighten a horse."

"Ugly, indeed! I wonder which is best, you or me. But, I tell you what, Tom, you've no need to give yourself such

airs, for if you do, I'll tell Miſs of you know what—."

"Who cares if you do? you may tell what you will; I don't mind—"

"Indeed," cried I, "I do not deſire to hear any ſecrets."

"O, but I'm reſolved I'll tell you, becauſe Tom's ſo very ſpiteful. You muſt know, Miſs, t'other night—"

"Poll," cried the brother, "if you tell of that, Miſs ſhall know all about your meeting young Brown,—you know when!—So I'll be quits with you, one way or another."

Miſs Polly coloured, and again propoſed our going down ſtairs till Mr. Smith's room was ready for our reception.

"Aye, ſo we will," ſaid Miſs Branghton; "I'll aſſure you, Couſin, we have ſome very genteel people paſs by our ſhop ſometimes. Polly and I always go and ſit there, when we've cleaned ourſelves."

"Yes, Miſs," cried the brother, "they do nothing elſe all day long, when father don't ſcold them. But the beſt fun is, when they've got all their dirty things on, and all their hair about their ears, ſometimes I ſend young Brown up ſtairs to them; and then, there's ſuch a fuſs!—there they hide themſelves, and run away, and ſqueel and ſquall like any thing mad: and ſo then I puts the two cats into the room,

room, and I gives 'em a good whipping, and ſo that ſets them a ſqualling too; ſo there's ſuch a noiſe, and ſuch an uproar! —Lord, you can't think, Miſs, what fun it is!"

This occaſioned a freſh quarrel with the ſiſters; at the end of which, it was, at length, decided that we ſhould go to the ſhop.

In our way down ſtairs, Miſs Branghton ſaid aloud, "I wonder when Mr. Smith's room will be ready."

"So do I," anſwered Polly; "I'm ſure we ſhould not do any harm to it now."

This hint had not the deſired effect; for we were ſuffered to proceed very quietly.

As we entered the ſhop, I obſerved a young man, in deep mourning, leaning againſt the wall, with his arms folded, and his eyes fixed on the ground, apparently in profound and melancholy meditation: but the moment he perceived us, he ſtarted, and, making a paſſing bow, very abruptly retired. As I found he was permitted to go quite unnoticed, I could not forbear enquiring who he was.

"Lord!" anſwered Miſs Branghton, "he's nothing but a poor Scotch poet."

"For my part," ſaid Miſs Polly, "I believe he's juſt ſtarved, for I don't find he has any thing to live upon."

"Live upon!" cried the brother, "why he's a poet, you know, so he may live upon learning."

"Aye, and good enough for him too," said Miss Branghton, "for he's as proud as he's poor."

"Like enough," replied the brother, "but, for all that, you won't find he will live without meat and drink: no, no, catch a Scotchman at that if you can! why, they only come here for what they can get."

"I'm sure," said Miss Branghton, "I wonder Papa 'll be such a fool as to let him stay in the house, for I dare say he'll never pay for his lodging."

"Why, no more he would if he could get another Lodger: you know the bill's been put up this fortnight. Miss, if you should hear of a person that wants a room, I assure you it is a very good one, for all it's up three pair of stairs."

I answered, that as I had no acquaintance in London, I had not any chance of assisting them: but both my compassion and my curiosity were excited for this poor young man; and I asked them some further particulars concerning him.

They then acquainted me, that they had only known him three months. When he first lodged with them, he agreed to board also;

alſo; but had lately told them, he would eat by himſelf, though they all believed he had hardly ever taſted a morſel of meat ſince he left their table. They ſaid, that he had always appeared very low-ſpirited, but, for the laſt month, he had been *duller* than ever, and, all of a ſudden, had put himſelf into mourning, though they knew not for whom, nor for what, but they ſuppoſed it was only for convenience, as no perſon had ever been to ſee or enquire for him ſince his reſidence amongſt them: and they were ſure he was very poor, as he had not paid for his lodgings the laſt three weeks: and finally, they concluded he was a poet, or elſe half-crazy, becauſe they had, at different times, found ſcraps of poetry in his room.

They then produced ſome unfiniſhed verſes, written on ſmall pieces of paper, unconnected, and of a moſt melancholy caſt. Among them was the fragment of an ode, which, at my requeſt, they lent me to copy; and, as you may perhaps like to ſee it, I will write it now.

O LIFE! thou lingering dream of grief, of pain,
And every ill that Nature can ſuſtain,
Strange, mutable, and wild!

Now

Now flattering with Hope moſt fair,
Depreſſing now with fell Deſpair,
The nurſe of Guilt, the ſlave of Pride,
That, like a wayward child,
Who, to himſelf a foe,
Sees joy alone in what's denied,
In what is granted, woe!

O thou poor, feeble, fleeting pow'r,
By Vice ſeduc'd, by Folly woo'd,
By Mis'ry, Shame, Remorſe, purſu'd;
And as thy toilſome ſteps proceed,
Seeming to Youth the faireſt flow'r,
Proving to Age the rankeſt weed,
A gilded, but a bitter pill,
Of varied, great, and complicated ill!

These lines are harſh, but they indicate an internal wretchedneſs which, I own, affects me. Surely this young man muſt be involved in misfortunes of no common nature: but I cannot imagine what can induce him to remain with this unfeeling family, where he is, moſt unworthily, deſpiſed for being poor, and, moſt illiberally, deteſted for being a Scotchman. He may, indeed, have motives which he cannot ſurmount, for ſubmitting to ſuch a ſituation. Whatever they are, I moſt heartily pity him, and cannot but wiſh it were in my power to afford him ſome relief.

During this converſation, Mr. Smith's foot-boy came to Miſs Branghton, and informed

informed her, that his master said she might have the room now when she liked it, for that he was presently going out.

This very genteel message, though it perfectly satisfied the Miss Branghtons, by no means added to my desire of being introduced to this gentleman: and upon their rising, with intention to accept his offer, I begged they would excuse my attending them, and said I would sit with Madame Duval till the tea was ready.

I therefore once more went up two pair of stairs, with young Branghton, who insisted upon accompanying me; and there we remained, till Mr. Smith's foot-boy summoned us to tea, when I followed Madame Duval into the dining-room.

The Miss Branghtons were seated at one window, and Mr. Smith was lolling indolently out of the other. They all approached us at our entrance, and Mr. Smith, probably to shew he was master of the apartment, most officiously handed me to a great chair, at the upper end of the room, without taking any notice of Madame Duval, till I rose, and offered her my own seat.

Leaving the rest of the company to entertain themselves, he, very abruptly, began to address himself to me, in a style of gallantry equally new and disagreeable to me.

me. It is true, no man can poſſibly pay me greater compliments, or make more fine ſpeeches, than Sir Clement Willoughby, yet his language, though too flowery, is always that of a gentleman, and his addreſs and manners are ſo very ſuperior to thoſe of the inhabitants of this houſe, that to make any compariſon between him and Mr. Smith would be extremely unjuſt. This latter ſeems very deſirous of appearing a man of gaiety and ſpirit; but his vivacity is ſo low-bred, and his whole behaviour ſo forward and diſagreeable, that I ſhould prefer the company of *dullneſs* itſelf, even as that goddeſs is deſcribed by Pope, to that of this *ſprightly* young man.

He made many apologies that he had not lent his room for our dinner, which, he ſaid, he ſhould certainly have done, had he ſeen me firſt; and he aſſured me, that when I came again, he ſhould be very glad to oblige me.

I told him, and with ſincerity, that every part of the houſe was equally indifferent to me.

"Why, Ma'am, the truth is, Miſs Biddy and Polly take no care of any thing, elſe, I'm ſure, they ſhould be always welcome to my room; for I'm never ſo happy as in obliging the ladies,—that's my character, Ma'am;—but, really, the laſt time they

they had it, every thing was made so greasy and so nasty, that, upon my word, to a man who wishes to have things a little genteel, it was quite cruel. Now, as to you, Ma'am, it's quite another thing; for I should not mind if every thing I had was spoilt, for the sake of having the pleasure to oblige you; and, I assure you, Ma'am, it makes me quite happy, that I have a room good enough to receive you."

This elegant speech was followed by many others, so much in the same style, that to write them would be superfluous; and, as he did not allow me a moment to speak to any other person, the rest of the evening was consumed in a painful attention to this irksome young man, who seemed to intend appearing before me to the utmost advantage.

Adieu, my dear Sir. I fear you will be sick of reading about this family; yet I must write of them, or not of any, since I mix with no other. Happy shall I be, when I quit them all, and again return to Berry Hill!

LETTER

LETTER XII.

Evelina in continuation.

June 10th.

THIS morning, Mr. Smith called, *on purpose*, he said, to offer me a ticket for the next Hampstead assembly. I thanked him, but desired to be excused accepting it; he would not, however, be denied, nor answered; and, in a manner both vehement and free, pressed and urged his offer till I was wearied to death; but, when he found me resolute, he seemed thunderstruck with amazement, and thought proper to desire I would tell him my reasons.

Obvious as they must, surely, have been to any other person, they were such as I knew not how to repeat to him; and, when he found I hesitated, he said, "Indeed, Ma'am, you are too modest; I assure you the ticket is quite at your service, and I shall be very happy to dance with you; so pray don't be so coy."

"Indeed, Sir," returned I, "you are mistaken; I never supposed you would offer a ticket, without wishing it should be accepted; but it would answer no purpose to mention the reasons which make me decline

cline it, since they cannot possibly be removed."

This speech seemed very much to mortify him, which I could not be concerned at, as I did not chuse to be treated by him with so much freedom. When he was, at last, convinced that his application to me was ineffectual, he addressed himself to Madame Duval, and begged she would interfere in his favour, offering, at the same time, to procure another ticket for herself.

"*Ma foi*, Sir," answered she, angrily, "you might as well have had the complaisance to ask me before, for, I assure you, I don't approve of no such rudeness: however, you may keep your tickets to yourself, for we don't want none of 'em."

This rebuke almost overset him; the made many apologies, and said that he should certainly have first applied to her, but that he had no notion the *young* lady would have refused him, and, on the contrary, had concluded that she would have assisted him to persuade Madame Duval herself.

This excuse appeased her; and he pleaded his cause so successfully, that, to my great chagrin, he gained it: and Madame Duval promised that she would go herself, and take me to the Hampstead assembly whenever he pleased.

Mr.

Mr. Smith then, approaching me with an air of triumph, ſaid, "Well, Ma'am, now, I think, you can't poſſibly keep to your denial."

I made no anſwer, and he ſoon took leave, though not till he had ſo wonderfully gained the favour of Madame Duval, that ſhe declared, when he was gone, he was the prettieſt young man ſhe had ſeen ſince ſhe came to England.

As ſoon as I could find an opportunity, I ventured, in the moſt humble manner, to entreat Madame Duval would not inſiſt upon my attending her to this ball; and repreſented to her, as well as I was able, the impropriety of my accepting any preſent from a young man ſo entirely unknown to me: but ſhe laughed at my ſcruples, called me a fooliſh, ignorant country girl, and ſaid ſhe ſhould make it her buſineſs to teach me ſomething of the world.

This ball is to be next week. I am ſure it is not more improper for, than unpleaſant to me, and I will uſe every poſſible endeavour to avoid it. Perhaps I may apply to Miſs Branghton for advice, as I believe ſhe will be willing to aſſiſt me, from diſliking, equally with myſelf, that I ſhould dance with Mr. Smith.

O, my

July 11th.

O, my dear Sir! I have been ſhocked to death;—and yet, at the ſame time, delighted beyond expreſſion, in the hope that I have happily been the inſtrument of ſaving a human creature from deſtruction!

This morning, Madame Duval ſaid ſhe would invite the Branghton family to return our viſit to-morrow; and, not chuſing to riſe herſelf,—for ſhe generally ſpends the morning in bed,—ſhe deſired me to wait upon them with her meſſage. M. Du Bois, who juſt then called, inſiſted upon attending me.

Mr. Branghton was in the ſhop, and told us that his ſon and daughters were out; but deſired me to ſtep up ſtairs, as he very ſoon expected them home. This I did, leaving M. Du Bois below. I went into the room where we had dined the day before, and, by a wonderful chance, I happened ſo to ſeat myſelf, that I had a view of the ſtairs, and yet could not be ſeen from them.

In about ten minutes time, I ſaw, paſſing by the door, with a look perturbed and affrighted, the ſame young man I mentioned in my laſt letter. Not heeding, as I ſuppoſe, how he went, in turning the corner

ner of the ſtairs, which are narrow and winding, his foot ſlipped, and he fell, but almoſt inſtantly riſing, I plainly perceived the end of a piſtol, which ſtarted from his pocket, by hitting againſt the ſtairs.

I was inexpreſſibly ſhocked. All that I had heard of his miſery occurring to my memory, made me conclude, that he was, at that very moment meditating ſuicide! Struck with the dreadful idea, all my ſtrength ſeemed to fail me. He moved on ſlowly, yet I ſoon loſt ſight of him; I ſat motionleſs with terror; all power of action forſook me; and I grew almoſt ſtiff with horror: till recollecting that it was yet poſſible to prevent the fatal deed, all my faculties ſeemed to return, with the hope of ſaving him.

My firſt thought was to fly to Mr. Branghton, but I feared that an inſtant of time loſt, might for ever be rued; and therefore, guided by the impulſe of my apprehenſions, as well as I was able, I followed him up ſtairs, ſtepping very ſoftly, and obliged to ſupport myſelf by the baniſters.

When I came within a few ſtairs of the landing-place, I ſtopped, for I could then ſee into his room, as he had not yet ſhut the door.

He

He had put the piſtol upon a table, and had his hand in his pocket, whence, in a few moments, he took out another: He then emptied ſomething on the table from a ſmall leather bag; after which, taking up both the piſtols, one in each hand, he dropt haſtily upon his knees, and called out, "O God!—forgive me!"

In a moment, ſtrength, and courage ſeemed lent me as by inſpiration: I ſtarted, and ruſhing precipitately into the room, juſt caught his arm, and then, overcome by my own fears, I fell down at his ſide, breathleſs and ſenſeleſs. My recovery, however, was, I believe, almoſt inſtantaneous; and then the ſight of this unhappy man, regarding me with a look of unutterable aſtoniſhment, mixed with concern, preſently reſtored to me my recollection. I aroſe, though with difficulty; he did the ſame; the piſtols, as I ſoon ſaw, were both on the floor.

Unwilling to leave them, and, indeed, too weak to move, I leant one hand on the table, and then ſtood perfectly ſtill: while he, his eyes caſt wildly towards me, ſeemed too infinitely amazed to be capable of either ſpeech or action.

I believe we were ſome minutes in this extraordinary ſituation; but as my ſtrength returned, I felt myſelf both aſhamed and awkward,

awkward, and moved towards the door. Pale, and motionleſs, he ſuffered me to paſs, without changing his poſture, or uttering a ſyllable; and, indeed,

He looked a bloodleſs image of deſpair!*

When I reached the door, I turned round; I looked fearfully at the piſtols, and, impelled by an emotion I could not repreſs, I haſtily ſtepped back, with an intention of carrying them away: but their wretched owner, perceiving my deſign, and recovering from his aſtoniſhment, darting ſuddenly down, ſeized them both himſelf.

Wild with fright, and ſcarce knowing what I did, I caught, almoſt involuntarily, hold of both his arms, and exclaimed, "O Sir! have mercy on yourſelf!"

The guilty piſtols fell from his hands, which, diſengaging from me, he fervently claſped, and cried, "Sweet Heaven! is this thy angel?"

Encouraged by ſuch gentleneſs, I again attempted to take the piſtols, but, with a look half frantic, he again prevented me, ſaying, "What would you do?"

"Awaken you," I cried, with a cou-

* Pope's Iliad.

rage

rage I now wonder at, " to worthier thoughts, and reſcue you from perdition."

I then ſeized the piſtols; he ſaid not a word,—he made no effort to ſtop me;—I glided quick by him, and tottered down ſtairs, ere he had recovered from the extremeſt amazement.

The moment I reached again the room I had ſo fearfully left, I threw away the piſtols, and flinging myſelf on the firſt chair, gave free vent to the feelings I had moſt painfully ſtifled, in a violent burſt of tears, which, indeed, proved a happy relief to me.

In this ſituation I remained ſome time; but when, at length, I lifted up my head, the firſt object I ſaw was the poor man who had occaſioned my terror, ſtanding, as if petrified, at the door, and gazing at me with eyes of wild wonder.

I ſtarted from the chair, but trembled ſo exceſſively, that I almoſt inſtantly ſunk again into it. He then, though without advancing, and in a faltering voice, ſaid, " Whoever, or whatever you are, relieve me, I pray you, from the ſuſpence under which my ſoul labours—and tell me if indeed I do not dream!"

To this addreſs, ſo ſingular and ſo ſolemn, I had not then the preſence of mind to frame any anſwer: but, as I preſently

perceived that his eyes turned from me to the piſtols, and that he ſeemed to intend regaining them, I exerted all my ſtrength, and ſaying, "O for Heaven's ſake forbear!" I roſe and took them myſelf.

"Do my ſenſes deceive me!" cried he, "do *I* live—? and do *you?*"

As he ſpoke, he advanced towards me! and I, ſtill guarding the piſtols, retreated, ſaying, "No, no—you muſt not—muſt not have them!"—

"Why—for what purpoſe, tell me!—do you withhold them?"—

"To give you time to *think*,—to ſave you from eternal miſery,—and, I hope, to reſerve you for mercy and forgiveneſs."

"Wonderful!" cried he, with uplifted hands and eyes, "moſt wonderful!"

For ſome time, he ſeemed wrapped in deep thought, till a ſudden noiſe of tongues below announcing the approach of the Branghtons, made him ſtart from his reverie: he ſprung haſtily forward,—dropt on one knee,—caught hold of my gown, which he preſſed to his lips, and then, quick as lightning, he roſe, and flew up ſtairs to his own room.

There was ſomething in the whole of this extraordinary and ſhocking adventure, really too affecting to be borne; and ſo entirely had I ſpent my ſpirits and exhauſted

my

my courage, that, before the Branghtons reached me, I had ſunk on the ground, without ſenſe or motion.

I believe I muſt have been a very horrid ſight to them, on their entrance into the room; for, to all appearance, I ſeemed to have ſuffered a violent death, either by my own raſhneſs, or the cruelty of ſome murderer; as the piſtols had fallen cloſe by my ſide.

How ſoon I recovered, I know not, but probably, I was more indebted to the loudneſs of their cries, than to their aſſiſtance; for they all concluded that I was dead, and, for ſome time, did not make any effort to revive me.

Scarcely could I recollect *where*, or, indeed, *what* I was, ere they poured upon me ſuch a torrent of queſtions and enquiries, that I was almoſt ſtunned with their vociferation. However, as ſoon and as well as I was able, I endeavoured to ſatisfy their curioſity, by recounting what had happened as clearly as was in my power. They all looked aghaſt at the recital, but, not being well enough to enter into any diſcuſſions, I begged to have a chair called, and to return inſtantly home.

Before I left them, I recommended, with great earneſtneſs, a vigilant obſervance of their unhappy lodger, and that they would

take care to keep from him, if poſſible, all means of ſelf-deſtruction.

M. Du Bois, who ſeemed extremely concerned at my indiſpoſition, walked by the ſide of the chair, and ſaw me ſafe to my own apartment.

The raſhneſs and the miſery of this ill-fated young man, engroſs all my thoughts. If, indeed, he is bent upon deſtroying himſelf, all efforts to ſave him will be fruitleſs. How much do I wiſh it were in my power to diſcover the nature of the malady which thus maddens him, and to offer or to procure alleviation to his ſufferings! I am ſure, my deareſt Sir, you will be much concerned for this poor man; and were you here, I doubt not but you would find ſome method of awakening him from the error which blinds him, and of pouring the balm of peace and comfort into his afflicted ſoul!

LETTER XIII.

Evelina in continuation.

Holborn, June 13th.

YESTERDAY all the Branghtons dined here.

Our converſation was almoſt wholly concerning the adventure of the day before. Mr. Branghton ſaid, that his firſt thought was inſtantly to turn his lodger out of doors, "Leſt," continued he, "his killing himſelf in my houſe, ſhould bring me into any trouble; but then, I was afraid I ſhould never get the money he owes me, whereas, if he dies in my houſe, I have a right to all he leaves behind him, if he goes off in my debt. Indeed, I would put him in priſon, —but what ſhould I get by that? he could not earn any thing there to pay me. So I conſidered about it ſome time, and then I determined to aſk him, point-blank, for my money out of hand. And ſo I did, but he told me he'd pay me next week: however, I gave him to underſtand, that, though I was no Scotchman, yet I did not like to be over-reached any more than he; ſo then he gave me a ring, which, to my certain knowledge, muſt be worth ten guineas, and told me he would not part with

it for his life, and a good deal more such sort of stuff, but that I might keep it till he could pay me."

"It is ten to one, Father," said young Branghton, "if he came fairly by it."

"Very likely not," answered he, "but that will make no great difference; for I shall be able to prove my right to it all one."

What principles! I could hardly stay in the room.

"I'm determined," said the son, "I'll take some opportunity to affront him soon, now I know how poor he is, because of the airs he gave himself to me when he first came."

"And pray how was that, child?" said Madame Duval.

"Why you never knew such a fuss in your life as he made, because, one day at dinner, I only happened to say, that I supposed he had never got such a good meal in his life, before he came to England: there he fell in such a passion as you can't think; but, for my part, I took no notice of it, for to be sure, thinks I, he must needs be a gentleman, or he'd never go to be so angry about it. However, he won't put his tricks upon me again, in a hurry."

"Well," said Miss Polly, "he's grown quite another creature to what he was, and

he

he does n't run away from us, nor hide himself, nor any thing; and he's as civil as can be, and he's always in the shop, and he saunters about the stairs, and he looks at every body as comes in."

"Why you may see what he's after plain enough," said Mr. Branghton; "he wants to see Miss again."

"Ha, ha, ha! Lord, how I should laugh," said the son, "if he should have fell in love with Miss!"

"I'm sure," said Miss Branghton, "Miss is welcome; but, for my part, I should be quite ashamed of such a beggarly conquest."

Such was the conversation till tea-time, when the appearance of Mr. Smith gave a new turn to the discourse.

Miss Branghton desired me to remark with what a *smart air* he entered the room, and asked me if he had not very much a *quality look?*

"Come," cried he, advancing to us. "you ladies must not sit together; wherever I go, I always make it a rule to part the ladies."

And then, handing Miss Branghton to the next chair, he seated himself between us.

"Well, now ladies, I think we sit very

well. What ſay you? for my part, I think it was a very good motion."

"If my couſin likes it," ſaid Miſs Branghton, "I'm ſure I've no objection."

"O," cried he, "I always ſtudy what the ladies like,—that's my firſt thought. And, indeed, it is but natural that you ſhould like beſt to ſit by the gentlemen, for what can you find to ſay to one another?"

"Say?" cried young Branghton, "O, never you think of that, they'll find enough to ſay, I'll be ſworn. You know the women are never tired of talking."

"Come, come, Tom," ſaid Mr. Smith, "don't be ſevere upon the ladies; when I'm by, you know I always take their part."

Soon after, when Miſs Branghton offered me ſome cake, this man of gallantry ſaid, "Well, if I was that lady, I'd never take any thing from a woman."

"Why not, Sir?"

"Becauſe I ſhould be afraid of being poiſoned for being ſo handſome."

"Who is ſevere upon the ladies *now?*" ſaid I.

"Why, really, Ma'am, it was a ſlip of the tongue; I did not intend to ſay ſuch a thing; but one can't always be on one's guard."

Soon

Soon after, the conversation turning upon public places, young Branghton asked if I had ever been to *George*'s at Hampstead?

"Indeed I never heard the place mentioned."

"Did n't you Miss?" cried he, eagerly, "why then you've a deal of fun to come, I'll promise you; and, I tell you what, I'll treat you there some Sunday soon. So now, Bid and Poll, be sure you don't tell Miss about the chairs, and all that, for I've a mind to surprise her; and if I pay, I think I've a right to have it my own way."

"George's at Hampstead!" repeated Mr. Smith, contemptuously, "how came you to think the young Lady would like to go to such a low place as that! But, pray Ma'am, have you ever been to Don Saltero's at Chelsea."

"No, Sir."

"No!—nay, then, I must insist on having the pleasure of conducting you there before long. I assure you, Ma'am, many genteel people go, or else, I give you my word, *I* should not recommend it."

"Pray, Cousin, said Mr. Branghton, "have you been at Sadler's Wells yet?"

"No, Sir."

"No! why then you've seen nothing!"

"Pray, Miſs," ſaid the Son, "how do you like the Tower of London?"

"I have never been to it, Sir."

"Goodneſs!" exclaimed he, "not ſeen the Tower!—why may be you ha' n't been o' top of the Monument, neither?"

"No, indeed, I have not."

"Why then you might as well not have come to London, for aught I ſee, for you've been no where."

"Pray, Miſs," ſaid Polly, "have you been all over Paul's Church, yet?"

"No, Ma'am."

"Well, but, Ma'am," ſaid Mr. Smith, "how do you like Vauxhall and Mary-bone?"

"I never ſaw either, Sir."

"No—God bleſs me!—you really ſurpriſe me,—why Vauxhall is the firſt pleaſure in life!—I know nothing like it.—Well, Ma'am, you muſt have been with ſtrange people, indeed, not to have taken you to Vauxhall. Why you have ſeen nothing of London yet.—However, we muſt try if *we* can't make you amends."

In the courſe of this *catechiſm*, many other places were mentioned, of which I have forgotten the names; but the looks of ſurpriſe and contempt that my repeated negatives incurred, were very diverting.

"Come," ſaid Mr. Smith, after tea, "as this

this Lady has been with such a queer set of people, let's shew her the difference; suppose we go somewhere to-night!—I love to do things with spirit!—Come, Ladies, where shall we go? For my part, I should like Foote's,—but the Ladies must chuse; I never speak myself."

"Well, Mr. Smith, is always in such spirits!" said Miss Branghton.

"Why yes, Ma'am, yes, thank God, pretty good spirits;—I have not yet the cares of the world upon me,—I am not *married*,—ha, ha, ha,—you'll excuse me, Ladies,—but I can't help laughing!—"

No objection being made, to my great relief, we all proceeded to the little theatre in the Haymarket, where I was extremely entertained by the performance of the Minor and the Commissary.

They all returned hither to supper.

LETTER XIV.

Evelina in continuation.

June 15.

YESTERDAY morning, Madame Duval again sent me to Mr. Branghton's, attended by M. Du Bois, to make some

party for the evening; becauſe ſhe had had the vapours the preceding day, from ſtaying at home.

As I entered the ſhop, I perceived the unfortunate North Briton, ſeated in a corner, with a book in his hand. He caſt his melancholy eyes up, as we came in, and, I believe, immediately recollected my face, for he ſtarted and changed colour. I delivered Madame Duval's meſſage to Mr. Branghton; who told me I ſhould find Polly up ſtairs, but that the others were gone out.

Up ſtairs, therefore, I went; and ſeated on a window, with Mr. Brown at her ſide, ſat Miſs Polly. I felt a little awkward at diſturbing them, and much more ſo, at their behaviour afterwards; for, as ſoon as the common enquiries were over, Mr. Brown grew ſo fond, and ſo fooliſh, that I was extremely diſguſted. Polly, all the time, only rebuked him with "La, now, Mr. Brown, do be quiet, can't you?—you ſhould not behave ſo before company.—Why now what will Miſs think of me?"—while her looks plainly ſhewed not merely the pleaſure, but the pride which ſhe took in his careſſes.

I did not, by any means, think it neceſſary to puniſh myſelf by witneſſing their tenderneſs, and, therefore, telling them I would

would see if Miss Branghton were returned home, I soon left them, and again descended into the shop.

"So, Miss, you've come again," said Mr. Branghton, "what, I suppose, you've a mind to sit a little in the shop, and see how the world goes, hay, Miss?"

I made no answer; and M. Du Bois instantly brought me a chair.

The unhappy stranger, who had risen at my entrance, again seated himself; and, though his head leant towards his book, I could not help observing, that his eyes were most intently and earnestly turned towards me.

M. Du Bois, as well as his broken English would allow him, endeavoured to entertain us, till the return of Miss Branghton and her brother.

"Lord, how tired I am!" cried the former, "I have not a foot to stand upon." And then, without any ceremony, she flung herself into the chair from which I had risen to receive her.

"You tired!" said the brother, "why then what must I be, that have walked twice as far?" And with equal politeness, he paid the same compliment to M. Du Bois which his sister had done to me.

Two chairs and three stools compleated the furniture of the shop, and Mr. Branghton,

ton, who chose to keep his own seat himself, desired M. Du Bois to take another; and then, seeing that I was without any, called out to the stranger, "Come, Mr. Macartney, lend us your stool."

Shocked at their rudeness, I declined the offer, and approaching Miss Branghton, said, "If you will be so good as to make room for me on your chair, there will be no occasion to disturb that gentleman."

"Lord, what signifies that?" cried the brother, "he has had his share of sitting, I'll be sworn."

"And if he has not," said the sister, "he has a chair up stairs; and the shop is our own, I hope."

This grossness so much disgusted me, that I took the stool, and carrying it back to Mr. Macartney myself, I returned him thanks, as civilly as I could, for his politeness, but said that I had rather stand.

He looked at me as if unaccustomed to such attention, bowed very respectfully, but neither spoke, nor yet made use of it.

I soon found that I was an object of derision to all present, except M. Du Bois, and, therefore, I begged Mr. Branghton would give me an answer for Madame Duval, as I was in haste to return.

"Well, then, Tom,—Biddy,—where have you a mind to go to-night? your

Aunt and Miſs want to be abroad and amongſt them."

"Why then, Papa," ſaid Miſs Branghton, "we'll go to Don Saltero's. Mr. Smith likes that place, ſo may be he'll go along with us."

"No, no," ſaid the ſon, "I'm for White-Conduit Houſe; ſo let's go there."

"White-Conduit Houſe, indeed?" cried his ſiſter, "no, Tom, that I won't."

"Why then let it alone; nobody wants your company;—we ſhall do as well without you, I'll be ſworn, and better too."

"I'll tell you what, Tom, if you don't hold your tongue, I'll make you repent it,—that I aſſure you."

Juſt then, Mr. Smith came into the ſhop, which he ſeemed to intend paſſing through; but when he ſaw me, he ſtopped and began a moſt courteous enquiry after my health, proteſting that, had he known I was there, he ſhould have come down ſooner. "But, bleſs me, Ma'am," added he, "what is the reaſon you ſtand?" and then he flew to bring me the ſeat from which I had juſt parted.

"Mr. Smith, you are come in very good time," ſaid Mr. Branghton, "to end a diſpute between my ſon and daughter, about where they ſhall all go to-night."

"O fie, Tom,—diſpute with a lady!" cried

cried Mr. Smith, "Now, as for me, I'm for where you will, provided this young Lady is of the party,—one place is the same as another to me, so that it be but agreeable to the ladies,—I would go any where with you, Ma'am," (to me) "unless, indeed, it were to *church*;—ha, ha, ha, —you'll excuse me, Ma'am, but, really, I never could conquer my fear of a parson; —ha, ha, ha,—really, ladies, I beg your pardon, for being so rude, but I can't help laughing for my life!"

"I was just saying, Mr. Smith," said Miss Branghton, "that I should like to go to Don Saltero's;—now pray where should *you* like to go?"

"Why really, Miss Biddy, you know I always let the ladies decide; I never fix any thing myself; but I should suppose it would be rather hot at the coffee-house,— however, pray Ladies, settle it among yourselves,—I'm agreeable to whatever you chuse."

It was easy for me to discover, that this man, with all his parade of *conformity*, objects to every thing that is not proposed by himself: but he is so much admired, by this family, for his *gentility*, that he thinks himself a complete fine gentleman!

"Come," said Mr. Branghton, "the best way will be to put it to the vote, and them

then every body will ſpeak their minds. Biddy, call Poll down ſtairs. We'll ſtart fair."

"Lord, Papa," ſaid Miſs Branghton, "why can't you as well ſend Tom?—you're always ſending me of the errands."

A diſpute then enſued, but Miſs Branghton was obliged to yield.

When Mr. Brown and Miſs Polly made their appearance, the latter uttered many complaints of having been called, ſaying ſhe did not want to come, and was very well where ſhe was.

"Now, Ladies, your votes;" cried Mr. Smith, "and ſo, Ma'am," (to me) "we'll begin with you. What place ſhall you like beſt?" and then, in a whiſper, he added, "I aſſure you, I ſhall ſay the ſame as you do, whether I like it or not."

I ſaid, that as I was ignorant what choice was in my power, I muſt beg to hear their deciſions firſt. This was reluctantly aſſented to; and then Miſs Branghton voted for Saltero's Coffee-houſe; her ſiſter, for a party to *Mother Red Cap's*; the brother, for White-Conduit Houſe; Mr. Brown, for Bagnigge Wells; Mr. Branghton for Sadler's Wells; and Mr. Smith for Vauxhall.

"Well now, Ma'am," ſaid Mr. Smith, "we have all ſpoken, and ſo you muſt give the

the casting vote. Come, what will you fix upon?"

"Sir," answered I, "I was to speak *last*."

"Well, so you will," said Miss Branghton, "for we've all spoke first."

"Pardon me," returned I, "the voting has not yet been quite general."

And I looked towards Mr. Macartney, to whom I wished extremely to shew that I was not of the same brutal nature with those by whom he was treated so grossly.

"Why pray," said Mr. Branghton, "who have we left out? would you have the cats and dogs vote?"

"No, Sir," cried I, with some spirit, "I would have *that gentleman* vote,—if, indeed, he is not superior to joining our party."

They all looked at me, as if they doubted whether or not they had heard me right: but, in a few moments, their surprise gave way to a rude burst of laughter.

Very much displeased, I told M. Du Bois that if he was not ready to go, I would have a coach called for myself.

O yes, he said, he was always ready to attend me.

Mr. Smith then advancing, attempted to take my hand, and begged me not to leave

leave them till I had settled the evening's plan.

"I have nothing, Sir," said I, "to do with it, as it is my intention to stay at home; and therefore Mr. Branghton will be so good as to send Madame Duval word what place is fixed upon, when it is convenient to him."

And then, making a slight courtesie, I left them.

How much does my disgust for these people encrease my pity for poor Mr. Macartney! I will not see them when I can avoid so doing; but I am determined to take every opportunity in my power, to shew civility to this unhappy man, whose misfortunes, with this family, only render him an object of scorn. I was, however, very well pleased with M. Du Bois, who, far from joining in their mirth, expressed himself extremely shocked at their ill-breeding.

We had not walked ten yards before we were followed by Mr. Smith, who came to make excuses, and to assure me they were *only joking*, and hoped I took nothing ill, for, if I did, he would make a quarrel of it himself with the Branghtons, rather than I should receive any offence.

I begged him not to take any trouble about so immaterial an affair, and assured him

him I should not myself. He was so officious, that he would not be prevailed upon to return home, till he had walked with us to Mr. Dawkins's.

Madame Duval was very much displeased that I brought her so little satisfaction. White-Conduit House was, at last, fixed upon; and, notwithstanding my great dislike of such parties and such places, I was obliged to accompany them.

Very disagreeable, and much according to my expectations, the evening proved. There were many people all smart and gaudy, and so pert and low-bred, that I could hardly endure being amongst them; but the party to which, unfortunately, I belonged, seemed all *at home*.

LETTER XV.

Evelina in continuation.

Holborn, June 17th.

YESTERDAY Mr. Smith carried his point, of making a party for Vauxhall, consisting of Madame Duval, M. Du Bois, all the Branghtons, Mr. Brown, himself,—and me!—for I find all endeavours vain

vain to escape any thing which these people desire I should not.

There were twenty disputes previous to our setting out; first, as to the *time* of our going: Mr. Branghton, his son, and young Brown, were for six o'clock; and all the ladies and Mr. Smith were for eight;—the latter, however, conquered.

Then, as to the *way* we should go; some were for a boat, others for a coach, and Mr. Branghton himself was for walking: but the boat, at length, was decided upon. Indeed this was the only part of the expedition that was agreeable to me, for the Thames was delightfully pleasant.

The Garden is very pretty, but too formal; I should have been better pleased, had it consisted less of strait walks, where

Grove nods at grove, each alley has its brother.

The trees, the numerous lights, and the company in the circle round the orchestra make a most brilliant and gay appearance; and, had I been with a party less disagreeable to me, I should have thought it a place formed for animation and pleasure. There was a concert, in the course of which, a hautbois concerto was so charmingly played, that I could have thought myself upon enchanted ground, had I had spirits more

more gentle to associate with. The hautbois in the open air is heavenly.

Mr. Smith endeavoured to attach himself to me, with such officious assiduity, and impertinent freedom, that he quite sickened me. Indeed, M. Du Bois was the only man of the party to whom, voluntarily, I ever addressed myself. He is civil and respectful, and I have found nobody else so since I left Howard Grove. His English is very bad, but I prefer it to speaking French myself, which I dare not venture to do. I converse with him frequently, both to disengage myself from others, and to oblige Madame Duval, who is always pleased when he is attended to.

As we were walking about the orchestra, I heard a bell ring, and, in a moment, Mr. Smith, flying up to me, caught my hand, and, with a motion too quick to be resisted, ran away with me many yards before I had breath to ask his meaning, though I struggled as well as I could to get from him. At last, however, I insisted upon stopping; "Stopping, Ma'am!" cried he, "why, we must run on, or we shall lose the cascade?"

And then again, he hurried me away, mixing with a crowd of people, all running with so much velocity, that I could not imagine what had raised such an alarm.

We

We were soon followed by the rest of the party; and my surprise and ignorance proved a source of diversion to them all, which was not exhausted the whole evening. Young Branghton, in particular, laughed till he could hardly stand.

The scene of the cascade I thought extremely pretty, and the general effect striking and lively.

But this was not the only surprise which was to divert them at my expence; for they led me about the garden, purposely to enjoy my first sight of various other deceptions.

About ten o'clock, Mr. Smith having chosen a *box* in a very conspicuous place, we all went to supper. Much fault was found with every thing that was ordered, though not a morsel of any thing was left; and the dearness of the provisions, with conjectures upon what profit was made by them, supplied discourse during the whole meal.

When wine and cyder were brought, Mr. Smith said, "Now let's enjoy ourselves; now is the time, or never. Well, Ma'am, and how do you like Vauxhall?"

"Like it!" cried young Branghton, "why how can she help liking it? she has never seen such a place before, that I'll answer for."

"For

"For my part," said Miss Branghton, "I like it because it is not vulgar."

"This must have been a fine treat for you, Miss," said Mr. Branghton; "why, I suppose you was never so happy in all your life before?"

I endeavoured to express my satisfaction with some pleasure, yet I believe they were much amazed at my coldness.

"Miss ought to stay in town till the last night," said young Branghton, "and then, it's my belief, she'd say something to it! Why, Lord, it's the best night of any; there's always a riot,—and there the folks run about,—and then there's such squealing and squalling!—and there all the lamps are broke,—and the women run skimper scamper;—I declare I would not take five guineas to miss the last night!"

I was very glad when they all grew tired of sitting, and called for the waiter to pay the bill. The Miss Branghtons said they would walk on, while the gentlemen settled the account, and asked me to accompany them; which, however, I declined.

"You girls may do as you please," said Madame Duval, "but as to me, I promise you, I shan't go no where without the gentlemen.'

"No more, I suppose, will my *Cousin*," said

said Miss Branghton, looking reproachfully towards Mr. Smith.

This reflection, which I feared would flatter his vanity, made me, most unfortunately, request Madame Duval's permission to attend them. She granted it, and away we went, having promised to meet in the room.

To the room, therefore, I would immediately have gone: but the sisters agreed that they would first have a *little pleasure*, and they tittered, and talked so loud, that they attracted universal notice.

"Lord, Polly," said the eldest, "suppose we were to take a turn in the dark walks!"

"Ay, do," answered she, "and then we'll hide ourselves, and then Mr. Brown will think we are lost."

I remonstrated very warmly against this plan, telling them that it would endanger our missing the rest of the party all the evening.

"O dear," cried Miss Branghton, "I thought how uneasy Miss would be, without a beau!"

This impertinence I did not think worth answering; and, quite by compulsion, I followed them down a long alley, in which there was hardly any light.

By the time we came near the end, a

large party of gentlemen, apparently very riotous, and who were hallowing, leaning on one another, and laughing immoderately, seemed to rush suddenly from behind some trees, and, meeting us face to face, put their arms at their sides, and formed a kind of circle, which first stopped our proceeding, and then our retreating, for we were presently entirely inclosed. The Miss Branghtons screamed aloud, and I was frightened exceedingly: our screams were answered with bursts of laughter, and, for some minutes, we were kept prisoners, till, at last, one of them, rudely, seizing hold of me, said I was a pretty little creature.

Terrified to death, I struggled with such vehemence to disengage myself from him, that I succeeded, in spite of his efforts to detain me; and immediately, and with a swiftness which fear only could have given me, I flew rather than ran up the walk, hoping to secure my safety by returning to the lights and company we had so foolishly left: but, before I could possibly accomplish my purpose, I was met by another party of men, one of whom placed himself so directly in my way, calling out, "Whither so fast, my love?"—that I could only have proceeded, by running into his arms.

In a moment, both my hands, by different

ferent persons, were caught hold of; and one of them, in a most familiar manner, desired, when I ran next, to accompany me in a race; while the rest of the party stood still and laughed.

I was almost distracted with terror, and so breathless with running, that I could not speak, till another advancing, said, I was as handsome as an angel, and desired to be of the party. I then just articulated, "For Heaven's sake, Gentlemen, let me pass!"

Another, then, rushing suddenly forward, exclaimed, "Heaven and earth! what voice is that?—"

"The voice of the prettiest little actress I have seen this age," answered one of my persecutors.

"No,—no,—no—" I *panted* out, "I am no actress,—pray let me go,—pray let me pass—."

"By all that's sacred," cried the same voice, which I then knew for Sir Clement Willoughby's, "'tis herself!"

"Sir Clement Willoughby!" cried I, "O Sir, assist—assist me—or I shall die with terror!—"

"Gentlemen," cried he, disengaging them all from me in an instant, "pray leave this lady to me."

Loud laughs proceeded from every mouth, and two or three said, "*Willoughby*

has all the luck! But one of them, in a passionate manner, vowed he would not give me up, for that he had the first right to me, and would support it.

"You are mistaken," said Sir Clement, "this lady is—I will explain myself to you another time; but, I assure you, you are all mistaken."

And then, taking my willing hand, he led me off, amidst the loud acclamations, laughter, and gross merriment of his impertinent companions.

As soon as we had escaped from them, Sir Clement, with a voice of surprise, exclaimed, "My dearest creature, what wonder, what strange revolution, has brought you to such a spot as this?"

Ashamed of my situation, and extremely mortified to be thus recognized by him, I was for some time silent, and when he repeated his question, only stammered out, "I have,—I hardly know how,—lost myself from my party.—"

He caught my hand, and eagerly pressing it, in a passionate voice, said, "O that I had sooner met with thee!"

Surprised at a freedom so unexpected, I angrily broke from him, saying, "Is this the protection you give me, Sir Clement?"

And

And then I saw, what the perturbation of my mind had prevented my sooner noticing, that he had led me, though I know not how, into another of the dark alleys, instead of the place whither I meant to go.

"Good God!" I cried, "where am I?—What way are you going?—"

"Where," answered he, "we shall be least observed."

Astonished at this speech, I stopped short, and declared I would go no further.

"And why not, my angel?" again endeavouring to take my hand.

My heart beat with resentment; I pushed him away from me with all my strength, and demanded how he dared treat me with such insolence?

"Insolence!" repeated he.

"Yes, Sir Clement, *insolence*; from you, who know me, I had a claim for protection,—not to such treatment as this."

"By heaven," cried he, with warmth, "you distract me,—why, tell me,—why do I see you here?—Is this a place for Miss Anville?—these dark walks!—no party!—no companion!—by all that's good, I can scarce believe my senses!"

Extremely offended at this speech, I turned angrily from him, and, not deigning to make any answer, walked on to-

wards that part of the garden whence I perceived the lights and company.

He followed me; but we were both some time silent.

"So you will not explain to me your situation?" said he, at length.

"No, Sir," answered I, disdainfully.

"Nor yet—suffer me to make my own interpretation?—"

I could not bear this strange manner of speaking; it made my very soul shudder,—and I burst into tears.

He flew to me, and actually flung himself at my feet, as if regardless who might see him, saying "O Miss Anville—loveliest of women—forgive my—my—I beseech you forgive me;—if I have offended,—if I have hurt you—I could kill myself at the thought!—"

"No matter, Sir, no matter," cried I, "if I can but find my friends,—I will never speak to—never see you again!"

"Good God!—good Heaven!—my dearest life, what is it I have done?—what is it I have said?—"

"You best know, Sir, *what* and *why*;—but don't hold me here,—let *me* be gone; and do *you!*"

"Not till you forgive me!—I cannot part with you in anger."

"For shame, for shame, Sir!" cried I indignantly,

indignantly, "do you suppose I am to be thus compelled?—do you take advantage of the absence of my friends, to affront me?"

"No, Madam," cried he, rising, "I would sooner forfeit my life than act so mean a part. But you have flung me into amazement unspeakable, and you will not condescend to listen to my request of giving me some explanation."

"The manner, Sir," said I, "in which you spoke that request, made, and will make me scorn to answer it."

"Scorn!—I will own to you, I expected not such displeasure from Miss Anville."

"Perhaps, Sir, if you had, you would less voluntarily have merited it."

My dearest life, surely it must be known to you, that the man does not breathe, who adores you so passionately, so fervently, so tenderly as I do!—why then will you delight in perplexing me?—in keeping me in suspence—in torturing me with doubt?—"

"I, Sir, delight in perplexing you!—You are much mistaken.—Your suspence, your doubts, your perplexities,—are of your own creating; and believe me, Sir, they may *offend*, but they can never *delight* me:—

but, as you have yourself raised, you must yourself satisfy them."

"Good God!—that such haughtiness and such sweetness can inhabit the same mansion!"

I made no answer, but quickening my pace, I walked on silently and sullenly; till this most impetuous of men, snatching my hand, which he grasped with violence, besought me to forgive him, with such earnestness of supplication, that, merely to escape his importunities, I was forced to speak, and, in some measure, to grant the pardon he requested: though it was accorded with a very ill grace: but, indeed, I knew not how to resist the humility of his entreaties: yet never shall I recollect the occasion he gave me of displeasure, without feeling it renewed.

We now soon arrived in the midst of the general crowd, and my own safety being then insured, I grew extremely uneasy for the Miss Branghtons, whose danger, however imprudently incurred by their own folly, I too well knew how to tremble for. To this consideration all my pride of heart yielded, and I determined to seek my party with the utmost speed; though not without a sigh did I recollect the fruitless attempt I had made, after the opera, of concealing from this man my unfortunate connections,

nections, which I was now obliged to make known.

I hastened, therefore, to the room, with a view of sending young Branghton to the aid of his sisters. In a very short time, I perceived Madame Duval, and the rest, looking at one of the paintings. I must own to you, honestly, my dear Sir, that an involuntary repugnance seized me, at presenting such a set to Sir Clement,—he who had been used to see me in parties so different!—My pace slackened as I approached them,—but they presently perceived me.

"*Ah, Mademoiselle!*" cried M. Du Bois, "*Que je suis charmé de vous voir!*"

"Pray, Miss," cried Mr. Brown, "where's Miss Polly?"

"Why, Miss, you've been a long while gone," said Mr. Branghton; "we thought you'd been lost. But what have you done with your cousins?"

I hesitated,—for Sir Clement regarded me with a look of wonder.

"*Pardi,*" cried Madame Duval, "I sha'n't let you leave me again in a hurry. Why, here we've been in such a fright!—and, all the while, I suppose you've been thinking nothing about the matter."

"Well," said young Branghton, "as long-

long as Miſs is come back, I don't mind, for as to Bid and Poll, they can take care of themſelves. But the beſt joke is, Mr. Smith is gone all about a looking for you."

Theſe ſpeeches were made almoſt all in a breath: but when, at laſt, they waited for an anſwer, I told them, that in walking up one of the long alleys, we had been frightened and ſeparated.

"The long alleys!" repeated Mr. Branghton, "and, pray, what had you to do in the long alleys? why, to be ſure, you muſt all of you have had a mind to be affronted!"

This ſpeech was not more impertinent to me, than ſurpriſing to Sir Clement, who regarded all the party with evident aſtoniſhment. However, I told young Branghton that no time ought to be loſt, for that his ſiſters might require his immediate protection.

"But how will they get it?" cried this brutal brother; "if they've a mind to behave in ſuch a manner as that, they ought to protect themſelves; and ſo they may for me."

"Well," ſaid the ſimple Mr. Brown, "whether you go or no, I think I may as well ſee after Miſs Polly."

The father, then, interfering, inſiſted that

that his ſon ſhould accompany him; and away they went.

It was now that Madame Duval firſt perceived Sir Clement; to whom turning with a look of great diſpleaſure, ſhe angrily ſaid, "*Ma foi*, ſo you are comed here, of all the people in the world!—I wonder, child, you would let ſuch a—ſuch a *perſon* as that keep company with you."

"I am very ſorry, Madam," ſaid Sir Clement, in a tone of ſurpriſe, "if I have been ſo unfortunate as to offend you; but I believe you will not regret the honour I now have of attending Miſs Anville, when you hear that I have been ſo happy as to do her ſome ſervice."

Juſt as Madame Duval, with her uſual *Ma foi*, was beginning to reply, the attention of Sir Clement was wholly drawn from her, by the appearance of Mr. Smith, who coming ſuddenly behind me, and freely putting his hands on my ſhoulders, cried, "O ho, my little runaway, have I found you at laſt? I have been ſcampering all over the gardens for you, for I was determined to find you, if you were above ground.—But how could you be ſo cruel as to leave us?"

I turned round to him, and looked with a degree of contempt that I hoped would have quieted him; but he had not the

ſenſe to underſtand me; and, attempting to take my hand, he added, "Such a demure-looking lady as you are, who'd have thought of your leading one ſuch a dance? —Come, now, don't be ſo coy,—only think what a trouble I have had in running after you!"

"The trouble, Sir," ſaid I, "was of your own choice,—not mine." And I walked round to the other ſide of Madame Duval.

Perhaps I was too proud,—but I could not endure that Sir Clement, whoſe eyes followed him with looks of the moſt ſurpriſed curioſity, ſhould witneſs his unwelcome familiarity.

Upon my removal, he came up to me, and, in a low voice, ſaid, "You are not, then, with the Mirvans?"

"No, Sir."

"And pray—may I aſk,—have you left them long?"

"No, Sir."

"How unfortunate I am!—but yeſterday I ſent to acquaint the Captain I ſhould reach the Grove by to-morrow noon! However, I ſhall get away as faſt as poſſible. Shall you be long in town?"

"I believe not, Sir."

"And then, when you leave it—which way

way—will you allow me to ask, which way you shall travel?"

"Indeed,—I don't know."

"Not know!—But do you return to the Mirvans any more?"

"I—I can't tell, Sir."

And then, I addressed myself to Madame Duval, with such a pretended earnestness, that he was obliged to be silent.

As he cannot but observe the great change in my situation, which he knows not how to account for, there is something in all these questions, and this unrestrained curiosity, that I did not expect from a man, who when he pleases can be so well-bred, as Sir Clement Willoughby. He seems disposed to think that the alteration in my companions authorises an alteration in his manners. It is true, he has always treated me with uncommon freedom, but never before with so disrespectful an abruptness. This observation, which he has given me cause to make, of his *changing with the tide*, has sunk him more in my opinion, than any other part of his conduct.

Yet I could almost have laughed, when I looked at Mr. Smith, who no sooner saw me addressed by Sir Clement, than, retreating aloof from the company, he seemed to lose at once all his happy self-

ſelf-ſufficiency and conceit; looking now at the baronet, now at himſelf, ſurveying, with ſorrowful eyes, his dreſs, ſtruck with his air, his geſtures, his eaſy gaiety; he gazed at him with envious admiration, and ſeemed himſelf, with conſcious inferiority, to ſhrink into nothing.

Soon after, Mr. Brown, running up to us, called out, "La, what, i'n't Miſs Polly come yet?"

"Come!" ſaid Mr. Branghton, "why, I thought you went to fetch her yourſelf, did n't you?"

"Yes, but I could n't find her;—yet I dare ſay I've been over half the garden."

"Half! but why did not you go over it all?"

"Why, ſo I will: but only I thought I'd juſt come and ſee if ſhe was here firſt?"

"But where's Tom?"

"Why, I don't know; for he would not ſtay with me, all as ever I could ſay; for we met ſome young gentlemen of his acquaintance, and ſo he bid me go and look by myſelf, for he ſaid, ſays he, I can divert myſelf better another way, ſays he."

This account being given, away again went this ſilly young man! and Mr. Branghton,

Branghton, extremely incenſed, ſaid he would go and ſee after them himſelf.

"So now," cried Madame Duval, "he's gone too! why, at this rate we ſhall have to wait for one or other of them all night!"

Obſerving that Sir Clement ſeemed diſpoſed to renew his enquiries, I turned towards one of the paintings, and, pretending to be very much occupied in looking at it, aſked M. Du Bois ſome queſtions concerning the figures.

"O, *Mon Dieu!*" cried Madame Duval, "don't aſk him; your beſt way is to aſk Mr. Smith, for he's been here the ofteneſt. Come, Mr. Smith, I dare ſay you can tell us all about them."

"Why, yes, Ma'am, yes," ſaid Mr. Smith, who, brightening up at this application, advanced towards us, with an air of aſſumed importance, which, however, ſat very uneaſily upon him, and begged to know what he ſhould explain firſt; "For I have attended," ſaid he, "to all theſe paintings, and know every thing in them perfectly well; for I am rather fond of pictures, Ma'am; and really, I muſt ſay, I think a pretty picture is a—a very—is really a very—is ſomething very pretty.—"

"So do I too," ſaid Madame Duval, "but pray now, Sir, tell us who that is meant

meant for," pointing to a figure of Neptune.

"That!—why that, Ma'am, is,—Lord bless me, I can't think how I come to be so stupid, but really I have forgot his name,—and yet, I know it as well as my own, too,—however, he's a *General*, Ma'am, they are all Generals."

I saw Sir Clement bite his lips; and, indeed, so did I mine.

"Well," said Madame Duval, "it's the oddest dress for a General ever I see!"

"He seems so capital a figure," said Sir Clement to Mr. Smith, "that I imagine he must be *Generalissimo* of the whole army."

"Yes, Sir, yes," answered Mr. Smith, respectfully bowing, and highly delighted at being thus referred to, "you are perfectly right,—but I cannot for my life think of his name;—perhaps, Sir, you may remember it?"

"No, really," replied Sir Clement, "my acquaintance among the Generals is not so extensive."

The ironical tone of voice in which Sir Clement spoke, entirely disconcerted Mr. Smith; who, again retiring to an humble distance, seemed sensibly mortified at the failure of his attempt to recover his consequence.

Soon after, Mr. Branghton returned, with

with his youngeſt daughter, whom he had reſcued from a party of inſolent young men; but he had not yet been able to find the eldeſt. Miſs Polly was really frightened, and declared ſhe would never go into the dark walks again. Her father, leaving her with us, went in queſt of her ſiſter.

While ſhe was relating her adventures, to which nobody liſtened more attentively than Sir Clement, we ſaw Mr. Brown enter the room. "O la!" cried Miſs Polly, "let me hide myſelf, and don't tell him I'm come."

She then placed herſelf behind Madame Duval, in ſuch a manner that ſhe could not be ſeen.

"So Miſs Polly is not come yet!" ſaid the ſimple ſwain; "well, I can't think where ſhe can be! I've been a looking, and looking, and looking all about, and I can't find her, all I can do."

"Well but, Mr. Brown," ſaid Mr. Smith, "ſha'n't you go and look for the lady again?"

"Yes, Sir," ſaid he, ſitting down, "but I muſt reſt me a little bit firſt. You can't think how tired I am."

"O fie, Mr. Brown, fie," cried Mr. Smith, winking at us, "tired of looking for a lady! Go, go, for ſhame!

"So I will, Sir, preſently; but you'd be

be tired too, if you'd walked so far: besides, I think she's gone out of the garden, or else I must have seen something or other of her."

A *he, he, he!* of the tittering Polly, now betrayed her, and so ended this ingenious little artifice.

At last appeared Mr. Branghton and Miss Biddy, who, with a face of mixed anger and confusion, addressing herself to me, said, "So, Miss, so you ran away from me! Well, see if I don't do as much by you, some day or other! But I thought how it would be, you'd no mind to leave the *gentlemen*, though you'd run away from *me*."

I was so much surprised at this attack, that I could not answer her for very amazement; and she proceeded to tell us how ill she had been used, and that two young men had been making her walk up and down the dark walks by absolute force, and as fast as ever they could tear her along; and many other particulars, which I will not tire you with relating. In conclusion, looking at Mr. Smith, she said, "But, to be sure, thought I, at least all the company will be looking for me; so I little expected to find you all here, talking as comfortably as ever you can. However, I know I may thank my cousin for it!"

"If

"If you mean *me*, Madam," said I, very much shocked, "I am quite ignorant in what manner I can have been accessary to your distress."

"Why, by running away so. If you'd stayed with us, I'll answer for it, Mr. Smith, and M. Du Bois would have come to look for us; but I suppose they could not leave your ladyship."

The folly and unreasonableness of this speech would admit of no answer. But what a scene was this for Sir Clement! his surprise was evident; and, I must acknowledge, my confusion was equally great.

We had now to wait for young Branghton, who did not appear for some time; and, during this interval, it was with difficulty that I avoided Sir Clement, who was on the rack of curiosity, and dying to speak to me.

When, at last, the hopeful youth returned, a long and frightful quarrel ensued between him and his father, in which his sisters occasionally joined, concerning his neglect; and he defended himself only by a brutal mirth, which he indulged at their expence.

Every one, now, seemed inclined to depart,—when, as usual, a dispute arose, upon the *way* of our going, whether in a coach

coach or a boat. After much debating, it was determined that we ſhould make two parties, one by the water and the other by land; for Madame Duval declared ſhe would not, upon any account, go into a boat at night.

Sir Clement then ſaid, that if ſhe had no carriage in waiting, he ſhould be happy to ſee her and me ſafe home, as his was in readineſs.

Fury ſtarted into her eyes, and paſſion inflamed every feature, as ſhe anſwered, "*Pardi*, no—you may take care of yourſelf, if you pleaſe; but as to me, I promiſe you I ſha'n't truſt myſelf with no ſuch perſon."

He pretended not to comprehend her meaning, yet, to wave a diſcuſſion, acquieſced in her refuſal. The coach party fixed upon conſiſted of Madame Duval, M. Du Bois, Miſs Branghton, and myſelf.

I now began to rejoice, in private, that, at leaſt, our lodgings would be neither ſeen nor known by Sir Clement. We ſoon met with an hackney-coach, into which he handed me, and then took leave.

Madame Duval, having already given the coachman her direction, he mounted the box, and we were juſt driving off, when Sir Clement exclaimed, "By Heaven, this

is the very coach I had in waiting for myself!"

"This coach, your honour!" said the man, "no, that it i'n't."

Sir Clement, however, swore that it was, and, presently, the man, begging his pardon, said he had really forgotten that he was engaged.

I have no doubt but that this scheme occurred to him at the moment, and that he made some sign to the coachman, which induced him to support it: for there is not the least probability that the accident really happened, as it is most likely his own chariot was in waiting.

The man then opened the coach-door, and Sir Clement advancing to it, said, "I don't believe there is another carriage to be had, or I would not incommode you; but, as it may be disagreeable to you to wait here any longer, I beg you will not get out, for you shall be set down before I am carried home, if you will be so good as to make a little room."

And so saying, in he jumpt, and seated himself between M. Du Bois and me, while our astonishment at the whole transaction was too great for speech. He then ordered the coachman to drive on, according to the directions he had already received.

For the first ten minutes, no one uttered a word;

a word; and then, Madame Duval, no longer able to contain herself, exclaimed, "*Ma foi*, if this is n't one of the impudentest things ever I see!"

Sir Clement, regardless of this rebuke, attended only to me; however, I answered nothing he said, when I could possibly avoid so doing. Miss Branghton made several attempts to attract his notice, but in vain, for he would not take the trouble of paying her any regard.

Madame Duval, during the rest of the ride, addressed herself to M. Du Bois in French, and in that language exclaimed with great vehemence against boldness and assurance.

I was extremely glad when I thought our journey must be nearly at an end, for my situation was very uneasy to me, as Sir Clement perpetually endeavoured to take my hand. I looked out of the coach-window, to see if we were near home; Sir Clement, stooping over me did the same, and then, in a voice of infinite wonder, called out, "Where the d—l is the man driving to? —why we are in broad St. Giles's!"

"O, he's very right," cried Madame Duval, "so never trouble your head about that, for I sha'n't go by no directions of your's, I promise you."

When, at last, we stopped, at *an Hosier's*

in *High Holborn*.—Sir Clement said nothing, but his *eyes*, I saw, were very busily employed in viewing the place, and the situation of the house. The coach, he said, belonged to him, and therefore he insisted upon paying for it; and then he took leave. M. Du Bois walked home with Miss Branghton, and Madame Duval and I retired to our apartments.

How disagreeable an evening's adventure! not one of the party seemed satisfied, except Sir Clement, who was in high spirits: but Madame Duval was enraged at meeting with him; Mr. Branghton, angry with his children; the frolic of the Miss Branghtons had exceeded their plan, and ended in their own distress; their brother was provoked that there had been no riot; Mr. Brown was tired; and Mr. Smith mortified. As to myself, I must acknowledge, nothing could be more disagreeable to me, than being seen by Sir Clement Willoughby with a party at once so vulgar in themselves, and so familiar to me.

And you, too, my dear Sir, will, I know, be sorry that I have met him; however, there is no apprehension of his visiting here, as Madame Duval is far too angry to admit him.

LETTER

LETTER XVI.

Evelina in continuation.

Holborn, June 18th.

MADAME Duval roſe very late this morning, and, at one o'clock, we had but juſt breakfaſted, when Miſs Branghton, her brother, Mr. Smith, and Monſieur Du Bois, called to enquire after our healths.

This civility in young Branghton, I much ſuſpect, was merely the reſult of his father's commands; but his ſiſter and Mr. Smith, I ſoon found, had motives of their own. Scarce had they ſpoken to Madame Duval, when, advancing eagerly to me, "Pray, Ma'am," ſaid Mr. Smith, "Who was that gentleman?"

"Pray, Couſin," cried Miſs Branghton, "was not he the ſame gentleman you ran away with that night at the opera?"

"Goodneſs! that he was," ſaid young Branghton; "and, I declare, as ſoon as ever I ſaw him, I thought I knew his face."

"I'm ſure I'll defy you to forget him," anſwered his ſiſter, "if once you had ſeen him: he is the fineſt gentleman I ever ſaw

saw in my life; don't you think so, Mr. Smith?"

"Why, you won't give the Lady time to speak," said Mr. Smith.——"Pray, Ma'am, what is the gentleman's name?"

"Willoughby, Sir."

"Willoughby! I think I have heard the name. Pray, Ma'am, is he married?"

"Lord, no, that he is not," cried Miss Branghton; "he looks too smart, by a great deal, for a married man. Pray, Cousin, how did you get acquainted with him?"

"Pray, Miss," said young Branghton, in the same breath, "what's his business?"

"Indeed I don't know," answered I.

"Something very genteel, I dare say," added Miss Branghton, "because he dresses so fine."

"It ought to be something that brings in a good income," said Mr. Smith, "for I'm sure he did not get that suit of cloaths he had on, under thirty or forty pounds; for I know the price of cloaths pretty well;—pray, Ma'am, can you tell me what he has a year?"

"Don't talk no more about him," cried Madame Duval, "for I don't like to hear his name; I believe he's one of the worst persons in the world; for though I never did him no manner of harm, nor so much as hurt a hair of his head, I know he was

an accomplice with that fellow, Captain Mirvan, to take away my life."

Every body but myſelf, now crowding around her for an explanation, a violent rapping at the ſtreet-door was unheard; and, without any previous notice, in the midſt of her narration, Sir Clement Willoughby entered the room. They all ſtarted, and, with looks of guilty confuſion, as if they feared his reſentment for having liſtened to Madame Duval, they ſcrambled for chairs, and in a moment were all formally ſeated.

Sir Clement, after a general bow, ſingling out Madame Duval, ſaid, with his uſual eaſineſs, "I have done myſelf the honour of waiting on you, Madam, to enquire if you have any commands to Howard Grove, whither I am going to-morrow morning."

Then, ſeeing the ſtorm that gathered in her eyes, before he allowed her time to anſwer, he addreſſed himſelf to me;—"And if you, Madam, have any with which you will honour me, I ſhall be happy to execute them."

"None at all, Sir."

"None!—not to Miſs Mirvan!—no meſſage! no letter!—"

"I wrote to Miſs Mirvan yeſterday by the poſt."

"My application ſhould have been earlier, had I ſooner known your addreſs."

"*Ma*

"*Ma foi*," cried Madame Duval, recovering from her surprise, "I believe never nobody saw the like of this!"

"Of what! Madam!" cried the undaunted Sir Clement, turning quick towards her, "I hope no one has offended you!"

"You don't hope no such a thing!" cried she, half choaked with passion, and rising from her chair. This motion was followed by the rest, and, in a moment, every body stood up.

Still Sir Clement was not abashed; affecting to make a bow of *acknowledgement* to the company in general, he said, "Pray —I beg — Ladies, — Gentlemen, — pray don't let me disturb you, pray keep your seats."

"Pray, Sir," said Miss Branghton, moving a chair towards him, "won't you sit down yourself?"

"You are extremely good, Ma'am:— rather than make any disturbance—"

And so saying, this strange man seated himself, as did, in an instant, every body else, even Madame Duval herself, who, overpowered by his boldness, seemed too full for utterance.

He then, and with as much composure as if he had been an expected guest, began to discourse on the weather,—its uncer-

tainty,—the heat of the public places in ſummer,—the emptineſs of the town,—and other ſuch common topics.

Nobody, however, anſwered him; Mr. Smith ſeemed afraid, young Branghton aſhamed, M. Du Bois amazed, Madame Duval enraged, and myſelf determined not to interfere. All that he could obtain, was the notice of Miſs Branghton, whoſe nods, ſmiles, and attention, had ſome appearance of entering into converſation with him.

At length, growing tired, I ſuppoſe, of engaging every body's eyes, and nobody's tongue; addreſſing himſelf to Madame Duval and to me, he ſaid, "I regard myſelf as peculiarly unfortunate, Ladies, in having fixed upon a time for my viſit to Howard Grove, when you are abſent from it."

"So I ſuppoſe, Sir, ſo I ſuppoſe," cried Madame Duval, haſtily riſing, and the next moment as haſtily ſeating herſelf,—"you'll be a wanting of ſomebody to make your game of, and ſo you may think to get *me* there again;—but, I promiſe you, Sir, you won't find it ſo eaſy a matter to make me a fool: and beſides that," raiſing her voice, "I've found you out, I aſſure you; ſo if ever you go to play your tricks upon me again, I'll make no more ado, but

but go directly to a justice of peace; so, Sir, if you can't think of nothing but making people ride about the country, at all hours of the night, just for your diversion, why you'll find I know some justices, as well as Justice Tyrrel."

Sir Clement was evidently embarrassed at this attack; yet he affected a look of surprise, and protested he did not understand her meaning.

"Well," cried she, "if I don't wonder where people can get such impudence! if you'll say that, you'll say any thing; however, if you swear till you're black in the face, I sha'n't believe you; for nobody sha'n't persuade me out of my senses, that I'm resolved."

"Doubtless not, Madam," answered he with some hesitation, "and I hope you do not suspect I ever had such an intention; my respect for you—"

"O Sir, you're vastly polite, all of a sudden! but I know what it's all for;—it's only for what you can get!—you could treat me like nobody at Howard Grove—but now you see I've a house of my own, you've a mind to wheedle yourself into it; but I sees your design, so you need n't trouble yourself to take no more trouble about that, for you shall never get nothing at my house,—not so much as a dish of

tea:—so now, Sir, you see I can play you trick for trick."

There was something so extremely gross in this speech, that it even disconcerted Sir Clement, who was too much confounded to make any answer.

It was curious to observe the effect which his embarrassment, added to the freedom with which Madame Duval addressed him, had upon the rest of the company: every one, who, before, seemed at a loss how, or if at all, to occupy a chair, now filled it with the most easy composure: and Mr. Smith, whose countenance had exhibited the most striking picture of mortified envy, now began to recover his usual expression of satisfied conceit. Young Branghton, too, who had been apparently awed by the presence of so fine a gentleman, was again himself, rude and familiar; while his mouth was wide distended into a broad grin, at hearing *his aunt give the beau such a trimming*.

Madame Duval, encouraged by this success, looked around her with an air of triumph, and continued her harangue: "And so, Sir, I suppose you thought to have had it all your own way, and to have comed here as often as you pleased, and to have got me to Howard Grove again, on purpose to have served me as you did before; but

but you ſhall ſee I'm as cunning as you, ſo you may go and find ſomebody elſe to uſe in that manner, and to put your maſk on, and to make a fool of; for as to me, if you go to tell me your ſtories about the Tower again, for a month together, I'll never believe 'em no more; and I'll promiſe you, Sir, if you think I like ſuch jokes, you'll find I'm no ſuch perſon."

"I aſſure you, Ma'am,—upon my honour—I really don't comprehend—I fancy there is ſome miſunderſtanding—"

"What, I ſuppoſe you'll tell me next you don't know nothing of the matter?"

"Not a word, upon my honour."

O Sir Clement! thought I, is it thus you prize your honour!

"*Pardi*," cried Madame Duval, "this is the moſt provokingeſt part of all! why you might as well tell me I don't know my own name."

"Here is certainly ſome miſtake; for I aſſure you, Ma'am—"

"Don't aſſure me nothing," cried Madame Duval, raiſing her voice, "I know what I'm ſaying, and ſo do you too; for did not you tell me all that about the Tower, and about M. Du Bois?—why M. Du Bois was n't never there, nor nigh it, and ſo it was all your own invention."

"May there not be two perſons of the

ſame name? the miſtake was but natural.—"

"Don't tell me of no miſtake, for it was all on purpoſe; beſides, did not you come, all in a maſk, to the chariot-door, and help to get me put in that ditch?—I'll promiſe you, I've had the greateſt mind in the world to take the law of you ever ſince, and if ever you do as much again, ſo I will, I aſſure you!"

Here Miſs Branghton tittered; Mr. Smith ſmiled contemptuouſly, and young Branghton thruſt his handkerchief into his mouth to ſtop his laughter.

The ſituation of Sir Clement, who ſaw all that paſſed, became now very awkward, even to himſelf, and he ſtammered very much in ſaying, "Surely, Madam—ſurely you—you cannot do me the—the injuſtice to think—that I had any ſhare in the—the—the misfortune which—"

"*Ma foi*, Sir," cried Madame Duval, with encreaſing paſſion, "you'd beſt not ſtand talking to me at that rate; I know it *was* you,—and if you ſtay there, a provoking me in ſuch a manner, I'll ſend for a conſtable this minute."

Young Branghton, at theſe words, in ſpite of all his efforts, burſt into a loud laugh; nor could either his ſiſter, or Mr. Smith,

Smith, though with more moderation, forbear joining in his mirth.

Sir Clement darted his eyes towards them, with looks of the moſt angry contempt, and then told Madame Duval, that he would not now detain her to make his vindication, but would wait on her ſome time when ſhe was alone.

"O *pardi*, Sir," cried ſhe, "I don't deſire none of your company; and if you was n't the moſt boldeſt perſon in the world, you would not dare look me in the face."

The ha, ha, ha's, and he, he, he's, grew more and more uncontroulable, as if the reſtraint from which they had burſt, had added to their violence. Sir Clement could no longer endure being the object who excited them, and, having no anſwer ready for Madame Duval, he haſtily ſtalked towards Mr. Smith and young Branghton, and ſternly demanded what they laughed at?

Struck by the air of importance which he aſſumed, and alarmed at the angry tone of his voice, their merriment ceaſed, as inſtantaneouſly as if it had been directed by clock-work, and they ſtared fooliſhly, now at him, now at each other, without making any anſwer but a ſimple "*Nothing*, Sir!"

"O *pour le coup*," cried Madame Duval, "this is too much! pray, Sir, what buſineſs have you to come here, a ordering people that comes to ſee me? I ſuppoſe next, nobody muſt laugh but yourſelf!"

"With me, Madam," ſaid Sir Clement, bowing, "a *lady* may do any thing, and, conſequently, there is no liberty in which I ſhall not be happy to indulge *you*:—but it has never been my cuſtom to give the ſame licence to *gentlemen*."

Then, advancing to me, who had ſat very quietly, on a window, during this ſcene, he ſaid, "Miſs Anville, I may at leaſt acquaint our friends at Howard Grove, that I had the honour of leaving you in good health." And then, lowering his voice, he added, "For Heaven's ſake, my deareſt creature, who are theſe people? and how came you ſo ſtrangely ſituated?"

"I beg my reſpects to all the family, Sir," anſwered I, aloud, "and I hope you will find them well."

He looked at me reproachfully, but kiſſed my hand; and then, bowing to Madame Duval and Miſs Branghton, paſſed haſtily by the men, and made his exit.

I fancy he will not be very eager to repeat his viſits, for I ſhould imagine he has rarely, if ever, been before in a ſituation ſo awkward and diſagreeable.

Madame

Madame Duval has been all ſpirits and exultation ever ſince he went, and only wiſhes Captain Mirvan would call, that ſhe might *do the ſame by him*. Mr. Smith, upon hearing that he was a Baronet, and ſeeing him drive off in a very beautiful chariot, declared that he would not have laughed upon any account, had he known his rank, and regretted extremely having miſſed ſuch an opportunity of making ſo *genteel* an *acquaintance*. Young Branghton vowed, that, if he had known as much, he would have *aſked for his cuſtom:* and his ſiſter has ſung his praiſes ever ſince, proteſting ſhe thought, *all along*, he was a man of *quality* by his *look*.

LETTER XVII.

Evelina in continuation.

June 21.

THE laſt three evenings have paſſed tolerably quiet, for the Vauxhall adventures had given Madame Duval a ſurfeit of public places: home, however, ſoon growing tireſome, ſhe determined to-night, ſhe ſaid, to relieve her *ennui*, by ſome amuſement; and it was therefore ſettled that we ſhould call upon the Branghtons,

at their houſe, and thence proceed to Marybone Gardens.

But, before we reached Snow-Hill, we were caught in a ſhower of rain: we hurried into the ſhop, where the firſt object I ſaw was Mr. Macartney, with a book in his hand, ſeated in the ſame corner where I ſaw him laſt; but his looks were ſtill more wretched than before, his face yet thinner, and his eyes ſunk almoſt hollow into his head. He lifted them up as we entered, and I even thought that they emitted a gleam of joy: involuntarily, I made to him my firſt courteſy; he roſe and bowed, with a precipitation that manifeſted ſurpriſe and confuſion.

In a few minutes we were joined by all the family, except Mr. Smith, who fortunately was engaged.

Had all the future proſperity of our lives depended upon the good or bad weather of this evening, it could not have been treated as a ſubject of greater importance. "Sure never any thing was ſo unlucky!—" "Lord how provoking!—" "It might rain for ever, if it would hold up now!—" Theſe, and ſuch expreſſions, with many anxious obſervations upon the kennels, filled up all the converſation till the ſhower was over.

And then a very warm debate aroſe, whether

whether we ſhould purſue our plan, or defer it to ſome finer evening; the Miſs Branghtons were for the former; their father was ſure it would rain again; Madame Duval, though ſhe deteſted returning home, yet dreaded the dampneſs of the gardens.

M. Du Bois then propoſed going to the top of the houſe, to examine whether the clouds looked threatening or peaceable; Miſs Branghton, ſtarting at this propoſal, ſaid they might go to Mr. Macartney's room, if they would, but not to her's.

This was enough for the brother; who, with a loud laugh, declared he would have ſome *fun*, and immediately led the way, calling to us all to follow. His ſiſters both ran after, but no one elſe moved.

In a few minutes, young Branghton, coming half way down ſtairs, called out, "Lord, why don't you all come? why here's Poll's things all about the room!"

Mr. Branghton then went; and Madame Duval, who cannot bear to be excluded from whatever is going forward, was handed up ſtairs by M. Du Bois.

I heſitated a few moments, whether or not to join them; but, ſoon perceiving that Mr. Macartney had dropped his book, and that I engroſſed his whole attention, I

prepared, from mere embarraſſment, to follow them.

As I went, I heard him move from his chair, and walk ſlowly after me. Believing that he wiſhed to ſpeak to me, and earneſtly deſiring myſelf to know if, by your means, I could poſſibly be of any ſervice to him, I firſt ſlackened my pace, and then turned back. But, though I thus met him half-way, he ſeemed to want courage or reſolution to addreſs me; for when he ſaw me returning, with a look extremely diſordered, he retreated haſtily from me.

Not knowing what I ought to do, I went to the ſtreet-door, where I ſtood ſome time, hoping he would be able to recover himſelf: but, on the contrary, his agitation encreaſed every moment; he walked up and down the room, in a quick, but unſteady pace, ſeeming equally diſtreſſed and irreſolute: and, at length, with a deep ſigh, he flung himſelf into a chair.

I was ſo much affected by the appearance of ſuch extreme anguiſh, that I could remain no longer in the room; I therefore glided by him, and went up ſtairs; but, ere I had gone five ſteps, he precipitately followed me, and, in a broken voice, called out, "Madam!—for Heaven's ſake—"

He ſtopped, but I inſtantly deſcended, reſtraining,

reſtraining, as well as I was able, the fullneſs of my own concern. I waited ſome time, in painful expectation, for his ſpeaking: all that I had heard of his poverty, occurring to me, I was upon the point of preſenting him my purſe, but the fear of miſtaking or offending him, deterred me. Finding, however, that he continued ſilent, I ventured to ſay, "Did you—Sir, wiſh to ſpeak to me?"

"I did!" cried he, with quickneſs, "but now—I cannot!"—

"Perhaps, Sir, another time,—perhaps if you recollect yourſelf—"

"Another time!" repeated he mournfully, "alas! I look not forward but to miſery and deſpair!"

"O Sir," cried I, extremely ſhocked, "you muſt not talk thus!—if you forſake *yourſelf*, how can you expect—"

I ſtopped. "Tell me, tell me," cried he, with eagerneſs, "who you are?—whence you come?—and by what ſtrange means you ſeem to be arbitreſs and ruler of the deſtiny of ſuch a wretch as I am?"

"Would to Heaven," cried I, "I could ſerve you!"

"You can!"

"And how? pray tell me how?"

"To tell you—is death to me! yet I *will* tell you,—I have a *right* to your aſſiſtance,

ance,—you have deprived me of the only resource to which I could apply,—and therefore—"

"Pray, pray, ſpeak;" cried I, putting my hand into my pocket, "they will be down ſtairs in a moment!"

"I will, Madam.—Can you—will you—I think you will!—may I then—" he ſtopped and pauſed, "ſay, will you——" then ſuddenly turning from me, "Great Heaven! I cannot ſpeak!" and he went back to the ſhop.

I now put my purſe in my hand, and following him, ſaid, "If indeed, Sir, I can aſſiſt you, why ſhould you deny me ſo great a ſatisfaction? Will you permit me to—"

I dared not go on; but with a countenance very much ſoftened, he approached me, and ſaid, "Your voice, Madam, is the voice of compaſſion!—ſuch a voice as theſe ears have long been ſtrangers to!"

Juſt then, young Branghton called out vehemently to me, to come up ſtairs; I ſeized the opportunity of haſtening away: and therefore ſaying, "Heaven, Sir, protect and comfort you!" I let fall my purſe upon the ground, not daring to preſent it to him, and ran up ſtairs with the utmoſt ſwiftneſs.

Too well do I know you, my ever honoured Sir, to fear your diſpleaſure for this action:

action: I must, however, assure you I shall need no fresh supply during my stay in town, as I am at little expence, and hope soon to return to Howard Grove.

Soon, did I say! when not a fortnight is yet expired, of the long and tedious month I must linger out here!

I had many witticisms to endure from the Branghtons, upon account of my staying so long with the *Scotch mope*, as they call him; but I attended to them very little, for my whole heart was filled with pity and concern. I was very glad to find the Marybone scheme was deferred, another shower of rain having put a stop to the dissension upon this subject; the rest of the evening was employed in most violent quarrelling between Miss Polly and her brother, on account of the discovery made by the latter, of the state of her apartment.

We came home early; and I have stolen from Madame Duval and M. Du Bois, who is here for ever, to write to my best friend.

I am most sincerely rejoiced, that this opportunity has offered for my contributing what little relief was in my power, to this unhappy man; and I hope it will be sufficient to enable him to pay his debts to this pitiless family.

LETTER

LETTER XVIII.

Mr. Villars to Evelina.

Berry Hill.

DISPLEASURE? my Evelina!—you have but done your duty; you have but shewn that humanity without which I should blush to own my child. It is mine, however, to see that your generosity be not repressed by your suffering from indulging it; I remit to you, therefore, not merely a token of my approbation, but an acknowledgement of my desire to participate in your charity.

O my child, were my fortune equal to my confidence in thy benevolence, with what transport should I, through thy means, devote it to the relief of indigent virtue! yet let us not repine at the limitation of our power, for, while our bounty is proportioned to our ability, the difference of the greater or less donation, can weigh but little in the scale of justice.

In reading your account of the misguided man, whose misery has so largely excited your compassion, I am led to apprehend, that his unhappy situation is less the effect of misfortune, than of misconduct. If he is reduced to that state of poverty repre-

sented.

ſented by the Branghtons, he ſhould endeavour by activity and induſtry to retrieve his affairs; and not paſs his time in idle reading in the very ſhop of his creditor.

The piſtol ſcene made me ſhudder: the courage with which you purſued this deſperate man, at once delighted and terrified me. Be ever thus, my deareſt Evelina, dauntleſs in the cauſe of diſtreſs! let no weak fears, no timid doubts, deter you from the exertion of your duty, according to the fulleſt ſenſe of it that Nature has implanted in your mind. Though gentleneſs and modeſty are the peculiar attributes of your ſex, yet fortitude and firmneſs, when occaſion demands them, are virtues as noble and as becoming in women as in men: the right line of conduct is the ſame for both ſexes, though the manner in which it is purſued, may ſomewhat vary, and be accommodated to the ſtrength or weakneſs of the different travellers.

There is, however, ſomething ſo myſterious in all you have yet ſeen or heard of this wretched man, that I am unwilling to ſtamp a bad impreſſion of his character, upon ſo ſlight and partial a knowledge of it. Where any thing is doubtful, the ties of ſociety, and the laws of humanity, claim a favourable interpretation; but remember,

my

my dear child, that those of discretion have an equal claim to your regard.

As to Sir Clement Willoughby, I know not how to express my indignation at his conduct. Insolence so insufferable, and the implication of suspicions so shocking, irritate me to a degree of wrath, which I hardly thought my almost worn-out passions were capable of again experiencing. You must converse with him no more; he imagines, from the pliability of your temper, that he may offend you with impunity; but his behaviour justifies, nay, calls for, your avowed resentment: do not, therefore, hesitate in forbidding him your sight.

The Branghtons, Mr. Smith, and young Brown, however ill-bred and disagreeable, are objects too contemptible for serious displeasure: yet I grieve much that my Evelina should be exposed to their rudeness and impertinence.

The very day that this tedious month expires, I shall send Mrs. Clinton to town, who will accompany you to Howard Grove. Your stay there will, I hope, be short, for I feel daily an encreasing impatience to fold my beloved child to my bosom!

ARTHUR VILLARS.

LETTER

LETTER XIX.

Evelina to the Rev. Mr. Villars.

Holborn, June 27th.

I Have juſt received, my deareſt Sir, your kind preſent, and ſtill kinder letter. Surely never had orphan ſo little to regret as your grateful Evelina! Though motherleſs, though worſe than fatherleſs, bereft from infancy of the two firſt and greateſt bleſſings of life, never has ſhe had cauſe to deplore their loſs; never has ſhe felt the omiſſion of a parent's tenderneſs, care, or indulgence; never, but from ſorrow for *them*, had reaſon to grieve at the ſeparation! Moſt thankfully do I receive the token of your approbation, and moſt ſtudiouſly will I endeavour ſo to diſpoſe of it, as may merit your generous confidence in my conduct.

Your doubts concerning Mr. Macartney give me ſome uneaſineſs. Indeed, Sir, he has not the appearance of a man whoſe ſorrows are the effect of guilt. But I hope, before I leave town, to be better acquainted with his ſituation, and enabled, with more certainty of his worth, to recommend him to your favour.

I am

I am very willing to relinquish all acquaintance with Sir Clement Willoughby, as far as it may depend upon myself so to do; but indeed, I know not how I should be able to absolutely *forbid him my sight.*

Miss Mirvan, in her last letter, informs me that he is now at Howard Grove, where he continues in high favour with the Captain, and is the life and spirit of the house. My time, since I wrote last, has passed very quietly; Madame Duval having been kept at home by a bad cold, and the Branghtons by bad weather. The young man, indeed, has called two or three times, and his behaviour, though equally absurd, is more unaccountable than ever: he speaks very little, takes hardly any notice of Madame Duval, and never looks at me, without a broad grin. Sometimes he approaches me, as if with intention to communicate intelligence of importance, and then, suddenly stopping short, laughs rudely in my face.

O how happy shall I be, when the worthy Mrs. Clinton arrives!

June 29th.

Yesterday morning, Mr. Smith called, to acquaint us that the Hampstead assembly was to be held that evening; and then he presented Madame Duval with one ticket,

and brought another to me. I thanked him for his intended civility, but told him I was surprised he had so soon forgotten my having already declined going to the ball.

"Lord, Ma'am," cried he, "how should I suppose you was in earnest? come, come, don't be cross; here's your Grand-mama ready to take care of you, so you can have no fair objection, for she'll see that I don't run away with you. Besides, Ma'am, I got the tickets on purpose."

"If you were determined, Sir," said I, "in making me this offer, to allow me no choice of refusal or acceptance, I must think myself less obliged to your intention, than I was willing to do."

"Dear Ma'am," cried he, "you're so smart, there is no speaking to you;—indeed, you are monstrous smart, Ma'am! but come, your Grand-mama shall ask you, and then I know you'll not be so cruel."

Madame Duval was very ready to interfere; she desired me to make no further opposition, said she should go herself, and insisted upon my accompanying her. It was in vain that I remonstrated; I only incurred her anger: and Mr. Smith, having given both the tickets to Madame Duval, with an air of triumph, said he should call early in the evening, and took leave.

I was much chagrined at being thus compelled

pelled to owe even the ſhadow of an obligation to ſo forward a young man; but I determined that nothing ſhould prevail upon me to dance with him, however my refuſal might give offence.

In the afternoon, when he returned, it was evident that he purpoſed to both charm and aſtoniſh me by his appearance; he was dreſſed in a very ſhowy manner, but without any taſte; and the inelegant ſmartneſs of his air and deportment, his viſible ſtruggle, againſt education, to put on the fine gentleman, added to his frequent conſcious glances at a dreſs to which he was but little accuſtomed, very effectually deſtroyed his aim of *figuring*, and rendered all his efforts uſeleſs.

During tea, entered Miſs Branghton and her brother. I was ſorry to obſerve the conſternation of the former, when ſhe perceived Mr. Smith. I had intended applying to her for advice upon this occaſion, but been always deterred by her diſagreeable abruptneſs. Having caſt her eyes ſeveral times from Mr. Smith to me, with manifeſt diſpleaſure, ſhe ſeated herſelf ſullenly in the window, ſcarce anſwering Madame Duval's enquiries, and when I ſpoke to her, turning abſolutely away from me.

Mr. Smith, delighted at this mark of his importance, ſat indolently quiet on his chair,

chair, endeavouring by his looks rather to diſplay, than to conceal, his inward ſatiſfaction.

"Good gracious!" cried young Branghton, "why, you're all as fine as five-pence! Why, where are you going?"

"To the Hampſtead ball," anſwered Mr. Smith.

"To a ball!" cried he, "Why, what, is Aunt going to a ball? Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yes, to be ſure," cried Madame Duval; "I don't know nothing need hinder me."

"And pray, Aunt, will you dance too?"

"Perhaps I may; but I ſuppoſe, Sir, that's none of your buſineſs, whether I do or not."

"Lord! well, I ſhould like to go! I ſhould like to ſee Aunt dance, of all things! But the joke is, I don't believe ſhe'll get ever a partner."

"You're the moſt rudeſt boy ever I ſee," cried Madame Duval angrily: "but, I promiſe you, I'll tell your father what you ſay, for I've no notion of ſuch vulgarneſs."

"Why, Lord, Aunt, what are you ſo angry for? there's no ſpeaking a word, but you fly into a paſſion: you're as bad as Biddy or Poll for that, for you're always a ſcolding."

"I desire, Tom," cried Miss Branghton, "you'd speak for yourself, and not make so free with my name."

"There, now, she's up! there's nothing but quarrelling with the women: it's my belief they like it better than victuals and drink."

"Fie, Tom," cried Mr. Smith, "you never remember your manners before the ladies: I'm sure you never heard *me* speak so rude to them."

"Why, Lord, *you* are a beau; but that's nothing to me. So, if you've a mind, you may be so polite as to dance with Aunt yourself." Then, with a loud laugh, he declared it would be *good fun* to see them.

"Let it be never so good, or never so bad," cried Madame Duval, "you won't see nothing of it, I promise you; so pray don't let me hear no more of such vulgar pieces of fun; for, I assure you, I don't like it. And as to my dancing with Mr. Smith, you may see wonderfuller things than that any day in the week."

"Why, as to that, Ma'am," said Mr. Smith, looking much surprised, "I always thought you intended to play at cards, and so I thought to dance with the young lady."

I gladly seized this opportunity to make my declaration, that I should not dance at all.

"Not dance at all!" repeated Miss Branghton; "yes, that's a likely matter truly, when people go to balls."

"I wish she may n't," said the brother; "'cause then Mr. Smith will have nobody but Aunt for a partner. Lord, how mad he'll be!"

"O, as to that," said Mr. Smith, "I don't at all fear prevailing with the young lady, if once I get her to the room."

"Indeed, Sir," cried I, much offended by his conceit, "you are mistaken; and therefore I beg leave to undeceive you, as you may be assured my resolution will not alter."

"Then pray, Miss, if it is not impertinent," cried Miss Branghton, sneeringly, "what do you go for?"

"Merely and solely," answered I, "to comply with the request of Madame Duval."

"Miss," cried young Branghton, "Bid only wishes it was she, for she has cast a sheep's-eye at Mr. Smith this long while."

"Tom," cried the sister, rising, "I've the greatest mind in the world to box your ears! How dare you say such a thing of me?"

"No, hang it, Tom, no, that's wrong," said Mr. Smith, simpering, "it is indeed, to tell the lady's secrets.—But never mind him, Miss Biddy, for I won't believe him."

"Why, I know Bid would give her ears to go," returned the brother; "but only Mr. Smith likes Miss best,—so does every body else."

While the sister gave him a very angry answer, Mr. Smith said to me, in a low voice, "Why now, Ma'am, how can you be so cruel as to be so much handsomer than your cousins? Nobody can look at them when you are by."

"Miss," cried young Branghton, "whatever he says to you, don't mind him, for he means no good; I'll give you my word for it, he'll never marry you, for he has told me again and again, he'll never marry as long as he lives; besides, if he'd any mind to be married, there's Bid would have had him long ago, and thanked him too."

"Come, come, Tom, don't tell secrets; you'll make the ladies afraid of me: but, I assure you," lowering his voice, "if I *did* marry, it should be your cousin."

Should be!—did you ever, my dear Sir, hear such unauthorised freedom? I looked at him with a contempt I did not wish to repress,

repreſs, and walked to the other end of the room.

Very ſoon after, Mr. Smith ſent for a hackney-coach. When I would have taken leave of Miſs Branghton, ſhe turned angrily from me, without making any anſwer. She ſuppoſes, perhaps, that I have rather ſought, than endeavoured to avoid, the notice and civilities of this conceited young man.

The ball was at the *long room* at Hampſtead.

This room ſeems very well named, for I believe it would be difficult to find any other epithet which might, with propriety, diſtinguiſh it, as it is without ornament, elegance, or any ſort of ſingularity, and merely to be marked by its length.

I was ſaved from the importunities of Mr. Smith, the beginning of the evening, by Madame Duval's declaring her intention to dance the two firſt dances with him herſelf. Mr. Smith's chagrin was very evident, but as ſhe paid no regard to it, he was neceſſitated to lead her out.

I was, however, by no means pleaſed, when ſhe ſaid ſhe was determined to dance a minuet. Indeed, I was quite aſtoniſhed, not having had the leaſt idea ſhe would have conſented to, much leſs propoſed, ſuch an exhibition of her perſon. She had

ſome trouble to make her intentions known, as Mr. Smith was rather averſe to ſpeaking to the Maſter of the ceremonies.

During this minuet, how much did I rejoice in being ſurrounded only with ſtrangers! She danced in a ſtyle ſo uncommon; her age, her ſhowy dreſs, and an unuſual quantity of *rouge*, drew upon her the eyes, and, I fear, the deriſion of the whole company. Who ſhe danced with, I know not; but Mr. Smith was ſo ill-bred as to laugh at her very openly, and to ſpeak of her with as much ridicule as was in his power. But I would neither look at, nor liſten to him; nor would I ſuffer him to proceed with a ſpeech which he began, expreſſive of his vexation at being forced to dance with her. I told him, very gravely, that complaints upon ſuch a ſubject might, with leſs impropriety, be made to every perſon in the room, than to me.

When ſhe returned to us, ſhe diſtreſſed me very much, by aſking what I thought of her minuet. I ſpoke as civilly as I could, but the coldneſs of my compliment evidently diſappointed her. She then called upon Mr. Smith to ſecure a good place among the country-dancers; and away they went, though not before he had taken the liberty to ſay to me in a low voice, "I proteſt to you, Ma'am, I ſhall be quite out of

of countenance, if any of my acquaintance ſhould ſee me dancing with the old lady!"

For a few moments I very much rejoiced at being relieved from this troubleſome man; but ſcarce had I time to congratulate myſelf, before I was accoſted by another, who *begged the favour of hopping a dance* with me.

I told him that I ſhould not dance at all; but he thought proper to importune me, very freely, not to be ſo cruel; and I was obliged to aſſume no little haughtineſs before I could ſatisfy him I was ſerious.

After this, I was addreſſed, much in the ſame manner, by ſeveral other young men, of whom the appearance and language were equally inelegant and low-bred: ſo that I ſoon found my ſituation was both diſagreeable and improper; ſince, as I was quite alone, I fear I muſt ſeem rather to invite, than to forbid, the offers and notice I received. And yet, ſo great was my apprehenſion of this interpretation, that I am ſure, my dear Sir, you would have laughed had you ſeen how proudly grave I appeared.

I knew not whether to be glad or ſorry, when Madame Duval and Mr. Smith returned. The latter inſtantly renewed his tireſome entreaties, and Madame Duval ſaid ſhe would go to the card-table: and

as soon as she was accommodated, she desired us to join the dancers.

I will not trouble you with the arguments which followed. Mr. Smith teazed me till I was weary of resistance; and I should at last have been obliged to submit, had I not fortunately recollected the affair of Mr. Lovel, and told my persecutor, that it was impossible I should dance with him, even if I wished it, as I had refused several persons in his absence.

He was not contented with being extremely chagrined, but took the liberty, openly and warmly, to expostulate with me upon not having said I was engaged.

The total disregard with which, involuntarily, I heard him, made him soon change the subject. In truth, I had no power to attend to him, for all my thoughts were occupied in re-tracing the transactions of the two former balls at which I had been present. The party—the conversation—the company—O how great the contrast!

In a short time, however, he contrived to draw my attention to himself, by his extreme impertinence; for he chose to express what he called his *admiration* of me, in terms so open and familiar, that he forced me to express my displeasure with equal plainness.

But how was I surprised, when I found

he

he had the temerity—what else can I call it?—to impute my resentment to doubts of his honour; for he said, "My dear Ma'am, you must be a little patient; I assure you I have no bad designs, I have not upon my word; but, really, there is no resolving upon such a thing as matrimony all at once; what with the loss of one's liberty, and what with the ridicule of all one's acquaintance,—I assure you, Ma'am, you are the first lady who ever made me even demur upon this subject; for, after all, my dear Ma'am, marriage is the devil!"

"Your opinion, Sir," answered I, "of either the married or the single life, can be of no manner of consequence to me, and therefore I would by no means trouble you to discuss their different merits."

"Why, really, Ma'am, as to your being a little out of sorts, I must own I can't wonder at it, for, to be sure, marriage is all in all with the ladies; but with us gentlemen it's quite another thing! Now only put yourself in my place,—suppose you had such a large acquaintance of gentlemen as I have,—and that you had always been used to appear a little—a little smart among them,—why now, how should you like to let yourself down all at once into a married man?"

I could not tell what to answer; so much conceit, and so much ignorance, both astonished and silenced me.

"I assure you, Ma'am," added he, "there is not only Miss Biddy, — though I should have scorned to mention her, if her brother had not blab'd, for I'm quite particular in keeping ladies secrets,—but there are a great many other ladies that have been proposed to me,—but I never thought twice of any of them, that is, not in a *serious* way,—so you may very well be proud," offering to take my hand, "for I assure you, there is nobody so likely to catch me at last as yourself."

"Sir," cried I, drawing myself back as haughtily as I could, "you are totally mistaken, if you imagine you have given me any pride I felt not before, by this conversation; on the contrary, you must allow me to tell you, I find it too humiliating to bear with it any longer."

I then placed myself behind the chair of Madame Duval; who, when she heard of the partners I had refused, pitied my ignorance of the world, but no longer insisted upon my dancing.

Indeed, the extreme vanity of this man makes me exert a spirit which I did not, till now, know that I possessed: but I cannot endure

endure that he ſhould think me at his diſpoſal.

The reſt of the evening paſſed very quietly, as Mr. Smith did not again attempt ſpeaking to me; except, indeed, after we had left the room, and while Madame Duval was ſeating herſelf in the coach, he ſaid, in a voice of *pique*, "Next time I take the trouble to get any tickets for a young lady, I'll make a bargain beforehand that ſhe ſha'n't turn me over to her grandmother."

We came home very ſafe; and thus ended this ſo long projected, and moſt diſagreeable affair.

LETTER XX.

Evelina in continuation.

I HAVE juſt received a moſt affecting letter from Mr. Macartney. I will incloſe it, my dear Sir, for your peruſal. More than ever have I cauſe to rejoice that I was able to aſſiſt him.

Mr. Macartney to Miſs Anville.

Madam,

IMPRESSED with the deepeſt, the moſt heart-felt ſenſe of the exalted humanity with which you have reſcued from deſtruction an unhappy ſtranger, allow me, with the humbleſt gratitude, to offer you my fervent acknowledgments, and to implore your pardon for the terror I have cauſed you.

You bid me, Madam, live: I have now, indeed, a motive for life, ſince I ſhould not willingly quit the world, while I withhold from the needy and diſtreſſed any ſhare of that charity which a diſpoſition ſo noble would, otherwiſe, beſtow upon them.

The benevolence with which you have intereſted yourſelf in my affairs, induces me to ſuppoſe you would wiſh to be acquainted with the cauſe of that deſperation from which you ſnatched me, and the particulars of that miſery of which you have, ſo wonderfully, been a witneſs. Yet, as this explanation will require that I ſhould divulge ſecrets of a nature the moſt delicate, I muſt entreat you to regard them as ſacred, even though I forbear to mention the names of the parties concerned.

I was brought up in Scotland, though my mother, who had the ſole care of me, was an Engliſhwoman, and had not one relation in that country. She devoted to me her whole time. The retirement in which we lived, and the diſtance from our natural friends, ſhe often told me, were the effect of an unconquerable melancholy with which ſhe was ſeized, upon the ſudden loſs of my father, ſome time before I was born.

At Aberdeen, where I finiſhed my education, I formed a friendſhip with a young man of fortune, which I conſidered as the chief happineſs of my life;—but, when he quitted his ſtudies, I conſidered it as my chief misfortune, for he immediately prepared, by direction of his friends, to make the tour of Europe. As I was deſigned for the church, and had no proſpect even of maintenance but from my own induſtry, I ſcarce dared permit even a wiſh of accompanying him. It is true, he would joyfully have borne my expences; but my affection was as free from meanneſs as his own, and I made a determination the moſt ſolemn, never to leſſen its dignity, by ſubmitting to pecuniary obligations.

We correſponded with great regularity, and the moſt unbounded confidence, for the ſpace of two years, when he arrived at Lyons in his way home. He wrote me, thence,

thence, the moſt preſſing invitation to meet him at Paris, where he intended to remain ſome time. My deſire to comply with his requeſt, and ſhorten our abſence, was ſo earneſt, that my mother, too indulgent to controul me, lent me what aſſiſtance was in her power, and, in an ill-fated moment, I ſet out for that capital.

My meeting with this dear friend was the happieſt event of my life: he introduced me to all his acquaintance; and ſo quickly did time ſeem to paſs at that delightful period, that the ſix weeks I had allotted for my ſtay were gone, ere I was ſenſible I had miſſed ſo many days. But I muſt now own, that the company of my friend was not the ſole ſubject of my felicity: I became acquainted with a young lady, daughter of an Engliſhman of diſtinction, with whom I formed an attachment which I have a thouſand times vowed, a thouſand times ſincerely thought would be laſting as my life. She had but juſt quitted a convent, in which ſhe had been placed when a child, and though Engliſh by birth, ſhe could ſcarcely ſpeak her native language. Her perſon and diſpoſition were equally engaging; but chiefly I adored her for the greatneſs of the expectations which, for my ſake, ſhe was willing to reſign.

When the time for my reſidence in Paris expired, I was almoſt diſtracted at the idea of

of quitting her; yet I had not the courage to make our attachment known to her father, who might reasonably form for her such views as would make him reject, with a contempt which I could not bear to think of, such an offer as mine. Yet I had free access to the house, where she seemed to be left almost wholly to the guidance of an old servant. who was my fast friend.

But, to be brief, the sudden and unexpected return of her father, one fatal afternoon, proved the beginning of the misery which has ever since devoured me. I doubt not but he had listened to our conversation, for he darted into the room with the rage of a madman. Heavens! what a scene followed! — what abusive language did the shame of a clandestine affair, and the consciousness of acting ill, induce me to brook! At length, however, his fury exceeded my patience,—he called me a beggarly, cowardly Scotchman. Fired at the words, I drew my sword; he, with equal alertness, drew his; for he was not an old man, but, on the contrary, strong and able as myself. In vain his daughter pleaded;—in vain did I, repentant of my anger, retreat — his reproaches continued; myself, my country, were loaded with infamy, till, no longer constraining my rage,—we fought,—and he fell!

At

At that moment I could almoſt have deſtroyed myſelf! The young lady fainted with terror; the old ſervant, drawn to us by the noiſe of the ſcuffle, entreated me to eſcape, and promiſed to bring intelligence of what ſhould paſs to my apartment. The diſturbance which I heard raiſed in the houſe obliged me to comply, and, in a ſtate of mind inconceivably wretched, I tore myſelf away.

My friend, who I found at home, ſoon diſcovered the whole affair. It was near midnight before the woman came. She told me that her maſter was living, and her young miſtreſs reſtored to her ſenſes. The abſolute neceſſity for my leaving Paris, while any danger remained, was forcibly urged by my friend: the ſervant promiſed to acquaint him of whatever paſſed, and he to tranſmit to me her information. Thus circumſtanced, with the aſſiſtance of this dear friend, I effected my departure from Paris, and, not long after, I returned to Scotland. I would fain have ſtopped by the way, that I might have been nearer the ſcene of all my concerns, but the low ſtate of my finances denied me that ſatisfaction.

The miſerable ſituation of my mind was ſoon diſcovered by my mother; nor would ſhe reſt till I communicated the cauſe. She heard

heard my whole ſtory with an agitation which aſtoniſhed me;—the *name* of the parties concerned, ſeemed to ſtrike her with horror;—but when I ſaid, *We fought, and he fell*;—"My ſon," cried ſhe, "you have then murdered your father!" and ſhe ſunk breathleſs at my feet. Comments, Madam, upon ſuch a ſcene as this, would to you be ſuperfluous, and to me agonizing: I cannot, for both our ſakes, be too conciſe. When ſhe recovered, ſhe confeſſed all the particulars of a tale which ſhe had hoped never to have revealed.—Alas! the loſs ſhe had ſuſtained of my father was not by death!—bound to her by no ties but thoſe of honour, he had voluntarily deſerted her!—Her ſettling in Scotland was not the effect of choice,—ſhe was baniſhed thither by a family but too juſtly incenſed;—pardon, Madam, that I cannot be more explicit!

My ſenſes, in the greatneſs of my miſery, actually forſook me, and for more than a week I was wholly delirious. My unfortunate mother was yet more to be pitied, for ſhe pined with unmitigated ſorrow, eternally reproaching herſelf for the danger to which her too ſtrict ſilence had expoſed me. When I recovered my reaſon, my impatience to hear from Paris almoſt deprived me of it again; and though the length of time

time I waited for letters might juſtly be attributed to contrary winds, I could not bear the delay, and was twenty times upon the point of returning thither at all hazards. At length, however, ſeveral letters arrived at once, and from the moſt inſupportable of my afflictions I was then relieved, for they acquainted me that the horrors of parricide were not in reſerve for me. They informed me alſo, that as ſoon as the wound was healed, a journey would be made to England, where my unhappy *ſiſter* was to be received by an aunt with whom ſhe was to live.

This intelligence ſomewhat quieted the violence of my ſorrows. I inſtantly formed a plan of meeting them in London, and, by revealing the whole dreadful ſtory, convincing this irritated parent that he had nothing more to apprehend from his daughter's unfortunate choice. My mother conſented, and gave me a letter to prove the truth of my aſſertions. As I could but ill afford to make this journey, I travelled in the cheapeſt way that was poſſible. I took an obſcure lodging, I need not, Madam, tell you where,—and boarded with the people of the houſe.

Here I languiſhed, week after week, vainly hoping for the arrival of my *family*; but my impetuoſity had blinded me to the imprudence

imprudence of which I was guilty in quitting Scotland so hastily. My wounded father, after his recovery, relapsed; and when I had waited in the most comfortless situation, for six weeks, my friend wrote me word, that the journey was yet deferred for some time longer.

My finances were then nearly exhausted, and I was obliged, though most unwillingly, to beg further assistance from my mother, that I might return to Scotland. Oh! Madam!—my answer was not from herself,—it was written by a lady who had long been her companion, and acquainted me that she had been taken suddenly ill of a fever,—and was no more!

The compassionate nature of which you have given such noble proofs, assures me I need not, if I could, paint to you the anguish of a mind overwhelmed with such accumulated sorrows.

Inclosed was a letter to a near relation, which she had, during her illness, with much difficulty, written, and in which, with the strongest maternal tenderness, she described my deplorable situation, and entreated his interest to procure me some preferment. Yet so sunk was I by misfortune, that a fortnight elapsed before I had the courage or spirit to attempt delivering this letter. I was then compelled to it by

by want. To make my appearance with ſome decency, I was neceſſitated, myſelf, to the melancholy taſk of changing my coloured cloaths for a ſuit of mourning;—and then I proceeded to ſeek my relation.

I was informed that he was not in town.

In this deſperate ſituation, the pride of my heart, which hitherto had not bowed to adverſity, gave way, and I determined to entreat the aſſiſtance of my friend, whoſe offered ſervices I had a thouſand times rejected. Yet, Madam, ſo hard is it to root from the mind its favourite principles, or prejudices, call them which you pleaſe, that I lingered another week ere I had the reſolution to ſend away a letter which I regarded as the death of my independence.

At length, reduced to my laſt ſhilling, dunned inſolently by the people of the houſe, and almoſt famiſhed, I ſealed this fatal letter, and, with a heavy heart, determined to take it to the poſt office. But Mr. Branghton and his ſon ſuffered me not to paſs through their ſhop with impunity; they inſulted me groſsly, and threatened me with impriſonment, if I did not immediately ſatisfy their demands. Stung to the ſoul, I bid them have but a day's patience, and flung from them, in a ſtate of mind too terrible for deſcription.

My letter, which I now found would be

be received too late to save me from disgrace, I tore into a thousand pieces, and scarce could I refrain from putting an instantaneous, an unlicensed period to my existence.

In this disorder of my senses, I formed the horrible plan of turning foot-pad; for which purpose I returned to my lodging, and collected whatever of my apparel I could part with, which I immediately sold, and with the profits purchased a brace of pistols, powder and shot. I hope, however, you will believe me, when I most solemnly assure you, my sole intention was to *frighten* the passengers I should assault, with these dangerous weapons, which I had not loaded, but from a resolution,—a dreadful one, I own,—to save *myself* from an ignominious death if seized. And, indeed, I thought that if I could but procure money sufficient to pay Mr. Branghton, and make a journey to Scotland, I should soon be able, by the public papers, to discover whom I had injured, and to make private retribution.

But, Madam, new to every species of villainy, my perturbation was so great that I could with difficulty support myself: yet the Branghtons observed it not as I passed through the shop.

Here

Here I ſtop: what followed is better known to yourſelf. But no time can ever efface from my memory that moment, when in the very action of preparing for my own deſtruction, or the lawleſs ſeizure of the property of others, you ruſhed into the room, and arreſted my arm!—It was, indeed, an awful moment!—the hand of Providence ſeemed to intervene between me and eternity; I beheld you as an angel!—I thought you dropt from the clouds;—the earth, indeed, had never before preſented to my view a form ſo celeſtial!—What wonder, then, that a ſpectacle ſo aſtoniſhing ſhould, to a man diſordered as I was, appear too beautiful to be human?

And now, Madam, that I have performed this painful taſk, the more grateful one remains of rewarding, as far as is in my power, your generous goodneſs, by aſſuring you it ſhall not be thrown away. You have awakened me to a ſenſe of the falſe pride by which I have been actuated,—a pride which, while it ſcorned aſſiſtance from a friend, ſcrupled not to compel it from a ſtranger, though at the hazard of reducing that ſtranger to a ſituation as deſtitute as my own. Yet, Oh! how violent was the ſtruggle which tore my conflicting ſoul,

ere

ere I could perſuade myſelf to profit by the benevolence which you were ſo evidently diſpoſed to exert in my favour!

By means of a ring, the gift of my much-regretted mother, I have for the preſent ſatisfied Mr. Branghton; and by means of your compaſſion, I hope to ſupport myſelf, either till I hear from my friend, to whom, at length, I have written, or till the relation of my mother returns to town.

To talk to you, Madam, of paying my debt, would be vain; I never can! the ſervice you have done me exceeds all power of return; you have reſtored me to my ſenſes, you have taught me to curb thoſe paſſions which bereft me of them, and, ſince I cannot avoid calamity, to bear it as a man! An interpoſition ſo wonderfully circumſtanced can never be recollected without benefit. Yet allow me to ſay, the pecuniary part of my obligation muſt be ſettled by my firſt ability.

I am, Madam, with the moſt profound reſpect, and heart-felt gratitude,

Your obedient,
and devoted humble ſervant,
J. MACARTNEY.

LETTER

LETTER XXI.

Evelina in continuation.

Holborn, July 1, 5 o'clock in the morn.

O SIR, what an adventure have I to write!—all night it has occupied my thoughts, and I am now risen thus early, to write it to you.

Yesterday it was settled that we should spend the evening in Marybone-gardens, where M. Torre, a celebrated foreigner, was to exhibit some fireworks. The party consisted of Madame Duval, all the Branghtons, M. Du Bois, Mr. Smith, and Mr. Brown.

We were almost the first persons who entered the Gardens, Mr. Branghton having declared he would have *all he could get for his money*, which, at best, was only fooled away, at such silly and idle places.

We walked in parties, and very much detached from one another; Mr. Brown and Miss Polly led the way by themselves; Miss Branghton and Mr. Smith followed, and the latter seemed determined to be revenged for my behaviour at the ball, by transferring all his former attention for me, to Miss Branghton, who received it with an air

air of uxultation: and very frequently they each of them, though from different motives, looked back, to discover whether I observed their good intelligence. Madame Duval walked with M. Du Bois; and Mr. Branghton by himself; but his son would willingly have attached himself wholly to me, saying frequently, "Come, Miss, let's you and I have a little fun together; you see they have all left us, so now let us leave them." But I begged to be excused, and went to the other side of Madame Duval.

This Garden, as it is called, is neither striking for magnificence nor for beauty; and we were all so dull and languid, that I was extremely glad when we were summoned to the orchestra, upon the opening of a concert; in the course of which I had the pleasure of hearing a concerto on the violin by Mr. Barthelemon, who, to me, seems a player of exquisite fancy, feeling, and variety.

When notice was given us, that the fireworks were preparing, we hurried along to secure good places for the sight: but, very soon, we were so encircled and incommoded by the crowd, that Mr. Smith proposed the *ladies* should make interest for a form to stand upon; this was soon effected, and the men then left us, to ac-

commodate themſelves better, ſaying they would return the moment the exhibition was over.

The firework was really beautiful, and told, with wonderful ingenuity, the ſtory of Orpheus and Eurydice; but, at the moment of the fatal look, which ſeparated them for ever, there was ſuch an exploſion of fire, and ſo horrible a noiſe, that we all, as of one accord, jumpt haſtily from the form, and ran away ſome paces, fearing that we were in danger of miſchief, from the innumerable ſparks of fire which glittered in the air.

For a moment or two, I neither knew nor conſidered whither I had run; but my recollection was ſoon awakened by a ſtranger's addreſſing me with, "Come along with me, my dear, and I'll take care of you."

I ſtarted, and then, to my great terror, perceived that I had out-run all my companions, and ſaw not one human being I knew! with all the ſpeed in my power, and forgetful of my firſt fright, I haſtened back to the place I had left;—but found the form occupied by a new ſet of people.

In vain, from ſide to ſide, I looked for ſome face I knew; I found myſelf in the midſt of a crowd, yet without party, friend,

or

or acquaintance. I walked, in disordered haste, from place to place, without knowing which way to turn, or whither I went. Every other moment, I was spoken to, by some bold and unfeeling man, to whom my distress, which, I think, must be very apparent, only furnished a pretence for impertinent witticisms, or free gallantry.

At last, a young officer, marching fiercely up to me, said, "You are a sweet pretty creature, and I enlist you in my service;" and then, with great violence, he seized my hand. I screamed aloud with fear, and, forcibly snatching it away, I ran hastily up to two ladies, and cried, "For Heaven's sake, dear ladies, afford me some protection!"

They heard me with a loud laugh, but very readily said, "Ay, let her walk between us;" and each of them took hold of an arm.

Then, in a drawling, ironical tone of voice, they asked *what had frightened my little Ladyship?* I told them my adventure very simply, and intreated they would have the goodness to assist me in finding my friends.

O yes, to be sure, they said, I should not want for friends, whilst I was with them. Mine, I said, would be very grateful for any civilities with which they might

favour me. But imagine, my dear Sir, how I must be confounded, when I observed, that every other word I spoke produced a loud laugh! However, I will not dwell upon a conversation, which soon, to my inexpressible horror, convinced me I had sought protection from insult, of those who were themselves most likely to offer it! You, my dearest Sir, I well know, will both feel for, and pity my terror, which I have no words to describe.

Had I been at liberty, I should have instantly run away from them, when I made the shocking discovery; but, as they held me fast, that was utterly impossible: and such was my dread of their resentment or abuse, that I did not dare make any open attempt to escape.

They asked me a thousand questions, accompanied by as many hallows, of who I was, what I was, and whence I came. My answers were very incoherent,—but what, good Heaven, were my emotions, when, a few moments afterwards, I perceived advancing our way,—Lord Orville!

Never shall I forget what I felt at that instant: had I, indeed, been sunk to the guilty state, which such companions might lead him to suspect, I could scarce have had feelings more cruelly depressing.

However, to my infinite joy, he passed

us without distinguishing me; though I saw that, in a careless manner, his eyes surveyed the party.

As soon as he was gone, one of these unhappy women said, "Do you know that young fellow?"

Not thinking it possible she should mean Lord Orville by such a term, I readily answered, "No, Madam."

"Why then," answered she, "you have a monstrous good stare, for a little country Miss."

I now found I had mistaken her, but was glad to avoid an explanation.

A few minutes after, what was my delight, to hear the voice of Mr. Brown, who called out, "Lord, i'n't that Miss what's her name?"

"Thank God," cried I, suddenly springing from them both, "thank God, I have found my party."

Mr. Brown was, however, alone, and, without knowing what I did, I took hold of his arm.

"Lord, Miss," cried he, "we've had such a hunt you can't think! some of them thought you was gone home; but I says, says I, I don't think, says I, that she's like to go home all alone, says I."

"So that gentleman belongs to you, Miss, does he?" said one of the women.

"Yes, Madam," answered I, "and I now thank you for your civility; but, as I am safe, will not give you any further trouble."

I courtsied slightly, and would have walked away; but, most unfortunately, Madame Duval and the two Miss Branghtons just then joined us.

They all began to make a thousand enquiries, to which I briefly answered, that I had been obliged to these two ladies for walking with me, and would tell them more another time: for, though I felt great *comparative* courage, I was yet too much intimidated by their presence, to dare be explicit.

Nevertheless, I ventured, once more, to wish them good night, and proposed seeking Mr. Branghton. These unhappy women listened to all that was said with a kind of callous curiosity, and seemed determined not to take any hint. But my vexation was terribly augmented, when, after having whispered something to each other, they very cavalierly declared, that they intended joining our party! and then, one of them, very boldly took hold of my arm, while the other, going round, seized that of Mr. Brown; and thus, almost forcibly, we were moved on between them, and followed by Madame Duval and the Miss Branghtons.

It would be very difficult to say which was greatest, my fright, or Mr. Brown's consternation; who ventured not to make the least resistance, though his uneasiness made him tremble almost as much as myself. I would instantly have withdrawn my arm; but it was held so tight, I could not move it; and poor Mr. Brown was circumstanced in the same manner on the other side; for I heard him say, "Lord, Ma'am, there's no need to squeeze one's arm so!"

And this was our situation,—for we had not taken three steps, when,—O Sir,—we again met Lord Orville!—but not again did he pass quietly by us,—unhappily I caught his eye;—both mine, immediately, were bent to the ground; but he approached me, and we all stopped.

I then looked up. He bowed. Good God, with what expressive eyes did he regard me! Never were surprise and concern so strongly marked,—yes, my dear Sir, he looked *greatly* concerned; and that, the remembrance of that, is the only consolation I feel, for an evening the most painful of my life.

What he first said I know not; for, indeed, I seemed to have neither ears nor understanding; but I recollect that I only courtsied in silence. He paused for an instant, as if—I believe so,—as if unwilling

to pass on; and then, finding the whole party detained, he again bowed, and took leave.

Indeed, my dear Sir, I thought I should have fainted, so great was my emotion from shame, vexation, and a thousand other feelings, for which I have no expressions. I absolutely tore myself from the woman's arm, and then, disengaging myself from that of Mr. Brown, I went to Madame Duval, and besought that she would not suffer me to be again parted from her.

I fancy—that Lord Orville saw what passed; for scarcely was I at liberty, ere he returned. Methought, my dear Sir, the pleasure, the surprise of that moment, recompensed me for all the chagrin I had before felt: for do you not think, that this return manifests, from a character so quiet, so reserved as Lord Orville's, something like solicitude in my concerns?—such, at least, was the interpretation I involuntarily made upon again seeing him.

With a politeness to which I have been some time very little used, he apologised for returning, and then enquired after the health of Mrs. Mirvan, and the rest of the Howard Grove family. The flattering conjecture which I have just acknowledged, had so wonderfully restored my spirits, that I believe I never answered him

so

so readily, and with so little constraint. Very short, however, was the duration of this conversation: for we were soon most disagreeably interrupted.

The Miss Branghtons, though they saw almost immediately the characters of the women to whom I had so unfortunately applied, were, nevertheless, so weak and foolish, as merely to *titter* at their behaviour. As to Madame Duval, she was for some time so strangely imposed upon, that she thought they were two real fine ladies. Indeed it is wonderful to see how easily and how frequently she is deceived: our disturbance, however, arose from young Brown, who was now between the two women, by whom his arms were absolutely pinioned to his sides: for a few minutes, his complaints had been only murmured; but he now called out aloud, "Goodness, Ladies, you hurt me like any thing! why I can't walk at all, if you keep pinching my arms so!"

This speech raised a loud laugh in the women, and redoubled the tittering of the Miss Branghtons. For my own part, I was most cruelly confused; while the countenance of Lord Orville manifested a sort of indignant astonishment; and, from that moment, he spoke to me no more, till he took leave.

Madame Duval, who now began to ſuſpect her company, propoſed our taking the firſt box we ſaw empty, beſpeaking a ſupper, and waiting till Mr. Branghton ſhould find us.

Miſs Polly mentioned one ſhe had remarked, to which we all turned; Madame Duval inſtantly ſeated herſelf; and the two bold women, forcing the frightened Mr. Brown to go between them, followed her example.

Lord Orville, with an air of gravity that wounded my very ſoul, then wiſhed me good night. I ſaid not a word; but my face, if it had any connection with my heart, muſt have looked melancholy indeed: and ſo, I have ſome reaſon to believe, it did; for he added, with much more ſoftneſs, though not leſs dignity, "Will Miſs Anville allow me to aſk her addreſs, and to pay my reſpects to her before I leave town?"

O how I changed colour at this unexpected requeſt!—yet what was the mortification I ſuffered, in anſwering, "My Lord, I am—in Holborn!"

He then bowed and left us.

What, what can he think of this adventure! how ſtrangely, how cruelly have all appearances turned againſt me! Had I been bleſſed with any preſence of mind, I ſhould

ſhould inſtantly have explained to him the accident which occaſioned my being in ſuch terrible company;—but I have none!

As to the reſt of the evening, I cannot relate the particulars of what paſſed; for, to you, I only write of what I think, and I can think of nothing but this unfortunate, this diſgraceful meeting. Theſe two wretched women continued to torment us all, but eſpecially poor Mr. Brown, who ſeemed to afford them uncommon diverſion, till we were diſcovered by Mr. Branghton, who very ſoon found means to releaſe us from their perſecutions, by frightening them away. We ſtayed but a ſhort time after they left us, which was all employed in explanations.

Whatever may be the conſtruction which Lord Orville may put upon this affair, to me it cannot fail of being unfavourable; to be ſeen—gracious Heaven!—to be ſeen in company with two women of ſuch character! — How vainly, how proudly have I wiſhed to avoid meeting him when only with the Branghtons and Madame Duval, —but now, how joyful ſhould I be had he ſeen me to no greater diſadvantage!—Holborn, too! what a direction!—he who had always—but I will not torment you, my deareſt Sir, with any more of my mortifying conjectures and apprehenſions: perhaps he

may call,—and then I shall have an opportunity of explaining to him all the most shocking part of the adventure. And yet, as I did not tell him at whose house I lived, he may not be able to discover me; I merely said *in Holborn*, and he, who I suppose saw my embarrassment, forbore to ask any other direction.

Well, I must take my chance!

Yet let me, in justice to Lord Orville, and in justice to the high opinion I have always entertained of his honour and delicacy,—let me observe the difference of his behaviour, when nearly in the same situation to that of Sir Clement Willoughby. He had at least equal cause to depreciate me in his opinion, and to mortify and sink me in my own: but far different was his conduct;—perplexed, indeed, he looked, and much surprised,—but it was benevolently, not with insolence. I am even inclined to think, that he could not see a young creature whom he had so lately known in a higher sphere, appear so suddenly, so strangely, so disgracefully altered in her situation, without some pity and concern. But, whatever might be his doubts and suspicions, far from suffering them to influence his behaviour, he spoke, he looked, with the same politeness and attention

with

with which he had always honoured me when countenanced by Mrs. Mirvan.

Once again, let me drop this subject.

In every mortification, every disturbance, how grateful to my heart, how sweet to my recollection, is the certainty of your never-failing tenderness, sympathy, and protection! Oh Sir, could I, upon this subject, could I write as I feel, — how animated would be the language of

Your devoted

EVELINA!

LETTER XXII.

Evelina to the Rev. Mr. Villars.

Holborn, July 1.

LISTLESS, uneasy, and without either spirit or courage to employ myself, from the time I had finished my last letter, I indolently seated myself at the window, where, while I waited Madame Duval's summons to breakfast, I perceived, among the carriages which passed by, a coronet coach, and, in a few minutes, from the window of it, Lord Orville! I instantly retreated, but not, I believe, unseen; for the coach immediately drove up to our door.

Indeed,

Indeed, my dear Sir, I must own I was greatly agitated; the idea of receiving Lord Orville by myself,—the knowledge that his visit was entirely to *me*,—the wish of explaining the unfortunate adventure of yesterday,—and the mortification of my present circumstances,—all these thoughts, occurring to me nearly at the same time, occasioned me more anxiety, confusion, and perplexity, than I can possibly express.

I believe he meant to send up his name; but the maid, unused to such a ceremony, forgot it by the way, and only told me, that a great Lord was below, and desired to see me: and, the next moment, he appeared himself.

If formerly, when in the circle of high life, and accustomed to its manners, I so much admired and distinguished the grace, the elegance of Lord Orville, think, Sir, how they must strike me now,—now, when, far removed from that splendid circle, I live with those to whom even civility is unknown, and decorum a stranger!

I am sure I received him very awkwardly; depressed by a situation so disagreeable, could I do otherwise? When his first enquiries were made, "I think myself very fortunate," he said, "in meeting with Miss Anville at home, and still more so, in finding her disengaged."

I only

I only courtſied. He then talked of Mrs. Mirvan; aſked how long I had been in town, and other ſuch general queſtions, which, happily, gave me time to recover from my embarraſſment. After which, he ſaid, "If Miſs Anville will allow me the honour of ſitting by her a few minutes (for we were both ſtanding) I will venture to tell her the motive which, next to enquiring after her health, has prompted me to wait on her thus early."

We were then both ſeated, and, after a ſhort pauſe, he ſaid, "How to apologiſe for ſo great a liberty as I am upon the point of taking, I know not;—ſhall I, therefore, rely wholly upon your goodneſs, and not apologiſe at all?"

I only bowed.

"I ſhould be extremely ſorry to appear impertinent,—yet hardly know how to avoid it."

"Impertinent! O my Lord," cried I, eagerly, "that, I am ſure, is impoſſible!"

"You are very good," anſwered he, "and encourage me to be ingenuous—"

Again he ſtopped: but my expectation was too great for ſpeech: at laſt, without looking at me, in a low voice and heſitating manner, he ſaid, "Were thoſe ladies with whom I ſaw you laſt night, ever in your company before?"

"No,

"No, my Lord," cried I, rising, and colouring violently, "nor will they ever be again."

He rose too, and, with an air of the most condescending concern, said, "Pardon, Madam, the abruptness of a question which I knew not how to introduce as I ought, and for which I have no excuse to offer, but my respect for Mrs. Mirvan, joined to the sincerest wishes for your happiness: yet I fear I have gone too far!"

"I am very sensible of the honour of your Lordship's attention," said I, "but ——."

"Permit me to assure you," cried he, finding I hesitated, "that officiousness is not my characteristic, and that I would by no means have risked your displeasure, had I not been fully satisfied you were too generous to be offended, without a real cause of offence."

"Offended!" cried I, "no, my Lord, I am only grieved,—grieved, indeed! to find myself in a siuation so unfortunate, as to be obliged to make explanations which cannot but mortify and shock me."

"It is I alone," cried he, with some eagerness, "who am shocked, as it is I who deserve to be mortified; I seek no explanation, for I have no doubt; but, in mistaking me, Miss Anville injures herself: allow me,

me, therefore, frankly and openly to tell you the intention of my visit."

I bowed, and we both returned to our seats.

"I will own myself to have been greatly surprised," continued he, "when I met you yesterday evening, in company with two persons who I was sensible merited not the honour of your notice; nor was it easy for me to conjecture the cause of your being so situated; yet, believe me, my incertitude did not for a moment do you injury; I was satisfied that their characters must be unknown to you, and I thought with concern of the shock you would sustain, when you discovered their unworthiness. I should not, however, upon so short an acquaintance, have usurped the privilege of intimacy, in giving my unasked sentiments upon so delicate a subject, had I not known that credulity is the sister of innocence, and therefore feared you might be deceived. A something, which I could not resist, urged me to the freedom I have taken to caution you; but I shall not easily forgive myself, if I have been so unfortunate as to give you pain."

The pride which his first question had excited, now subsided into delight and gratitude, and I instantly related to him, as well as I could, the accident which had occasioned

caſioned my joining the unhappy women with whom he had met me. He liſtened with an attention ſo flattering, ſeemed ſo much intereſted during the recital, and, when I had done, thanked me, in terms ſo polite, for what he was pleaſed to call my condeſcenſion, that I was almoſt aſhamed either to look at, or hear him.

Soon after, the maid came to tell me, that Madame Duval deſired to have breakfaſt made in her own room.

"I fear," cried Lord Orville, inſtantly riſing, "that I have intruded upon your time,—yet who, ſo ſituated, could do otherwiſe?" Then, taking my hand, "Will Miſs Anville allow me thus to ſeal my peace?" He preſſed it to his lips, and took leave.

Generous, noble Lord Orville! how diſintereſted his conduct! how delicate his whole behaviour! willing to adviſe, yet afraid to wound me!—Can I ever, in future, regret the adventure I met with at Marybone, ſince it has been productive of a viſit ſo flattering? Had my mortifications been ſtill more humiliating, my terrors ſtill more alarming, ſuch a mark of eſteem—may I not call it ſo?—from Lord Orville, would have made me ample amends.

And indeed, my dear Sir, I require ſome conſolation in my preſent very diſagreeable ſituation;

ſituation; for, ſince he went, two incidents have happened, that, had not my ſpirits been particularly elated, would greatly have diſconcerted me.

During breakfaſt, Madame Duval, very abruptly, aſked if I ſhould like to be married? and added, that Mr. Branghton had been propoſing a match for me with his ſon. Surpriſed, and, I muſt own, provoked, I aſſured her that, in thinking of me, Mr. Branghton would very vainly loſe his time.

"Why," cried ſhe, "I have had grander views for you, myſelf, if once I could get you to Paris, and make you be owned; but, if I can't do that, and you can do no better, why, as you are both my relations, I think to leave my fortune between you, and then, if you marry, you never need want for nothing."

I begged her not to purſue the ſubject, as, I aſſured her, Mr. Branghton was totally diſagreeable to me: but ſhe continued her admonitions and reflections, with her uſual diſregard of whatever I could anſwer. She charged me, very peremptorily, neither wholly to diſcourage, not yet to accept Mr. Branghton's offer, till ſhe ſaw what could be done for me: the young man, ſhe added, had often intended to ſpeak to me himſelf, but, not well knowing how to introduce the

the ſubject, he had deſired her to pave the way for him.

I ſcrupled not, warmly and freely to declare my averſion to this propoſal; but it was to no effect; ſhe concluded, juſt as ſhe had begun, by ſaying, that I ſhould not *have him, if I could do better.*

Nothing, however, ſhall perſuade me to liſten to any other perſon concerning this odious affair.

My ſecond cauſe of uneaſineſs ariſes, very unexpectedly, from M. Du Bois, who, to my infinite ſurpriſe, upon Madame Duval's quitting the room after dinner, put into my hand a note, and immediately left the houſe.

This note contains an open declaration of an attachment to me, which, he ſays, he ſhould never have preſumed to have acknowledged, had he not been informed that Madame Duval deſtined my hand to young Branghton,——a match which he cannot endure to think of. He beſeeches me, earneſtly to pardon his temerity, profeſſes the moſt inviolable reſpect, and commits his fate to time, patience, and pity.

This conduct in M. Du Bois gives me real concern, as I was diſpoſed to think very well of him. It will not, however, be difficult to diſcourage him, and therefore I ſhall not acquaint Madame Duval of his letter,

letter, as I have reaſon to believe it would greatly diſpleaſe her.

LETTER XXIII.

Evelina in continuation.

July 3.

O SIR, how much uneaſineſs muſt I ſuffer, to counterbalance one ſhort morning of happineſs!

Yeſterday, the Branghtons propoſed a party to Kenſington-gardens, and, as uſual, Madame Duval inſiſted upon my attendance.

We went in a hackney-coach to Piccadilly, and then had a walk though Hyde Park, which, in any other company, would have been delightful. I was much pleaſed with Kenſington-gardens, and think them infinitely preferable to thoſe of Vauxhall.

Young Branghton was extremely troubleſome; he inſiſted upon walking by my ſide, and talked with me almoſt by compulſion: however, my reſerve and coldneſs prevented his entering upon the hateful ſubject which Madame Duval had prepared me to apprehend. Once, indeed, when I was, accidentally, a few yards before the reſt, he ſaid,

ſaid, "I ſuppoſe, Miſs, aunt has told you about you know what?—ha'n't ſhe, Miſs?" —But I turned from him without making any anſwer. Neither Mr. Smith nor Mr. Brown were of the party; and poor M. Du Bois, when he found that I avoided him, looked ſo melancholy, that I was really ſorry for him.

While we were ſtrolling round the garden, I perceived, walking with a party of ladies at ſome diſtance, Lord Orville! I inſtantly retreated behind Miſs Branghton, and kept out of ſight till we had paſſed him: for I dreaded being ſeen by him again, in a public walk, with a party of which I was aſhamed.

Happily I ſucceeded in my deſign, and ſaw no more of him; for a ſudden and violent ſhower of rain made us all haſten out of the gardens. We ran till we came to a ſmall green-ſhop, where we begged ſhelter. Here we found ourſelves in company with two footmen, whom the rain had driven into the ſhop. Their livery, I thought, I had before ſeen; and upon looking from the window, I perceived the ſame upon a coachman belonging to a carriage, which I immediately recollected to be Lord Orville's.

Fearing to be known, I whiſpered Miſs Branghton not to ſpeak my name. Had I conſidered

considered but a moment, I should have been sensible of the inutility of such a caution, since not one of the party call me by any other appellation than that of *Cousin*, or of *Miss*; but I am perpetually involved in some distress or dilemma from my own heedlessness.

This request excited very strongly her curiosity; and she attacked me with such eagerness and bluntness of enquiry, that I could not avoid telling her the reason of my making it, and, consequently, that I was known to Lord Orville: an acknowledgment which proved the most unfortunate in the world; for she would not rest till she had drawn from me the circumstances attending my first making the acquaintance. Then, calling to her sister, she said, "Lord, Polly, only think! Miss has danced with a Lord!"

"Well," cried Polly, "that's a thing I should never have thought of! And pray Miss, what did he say to you?"

This question was much sooner asked than answered; and they both became so very inquisitive and earnest, that they soon drew the attention of Madame Duval and the rest of the party, to whom, in a very short time, they repeated all they had gathered from me.

"Goodness, then," cried young Branghton,

ton, "if I was Miſs, if I would not make free with his Lordſhip's coach to take me to town."

"Why ay," ſaid the father, "there would be ſome ſenſe in that; that would be making ſome uſe of a Lord's acquaintance, for it would ſave us coach-hire."

"Lord, Miſs," cried Polly, "I wiſh you would, for I ſhould like of all things to ride in a coronet coach!"

"I promiſe you," ſaid Madame Duval, "I'm glad you've thought of it, for I don't ſee no objection;—ſo let's have the coachman called."

"Not for the world," cried I, very much alarmed, "indeed it is utterly impoſſible."

"Why ſo?" demanded Mr. Branghton; "pray where's the good of your knowing a Lord, if you're never the better for him?"

"*Ma foi*, child," ſaid Madame Duval, "you don't know no more of the world than if you was a baby. Pray, Sir, (to one of the footmen) tell that coachman to draw up, for I wants to ſpeak to him."

The man ſtared, but did not move. "Pray, pray, Madam," ſaid I, "pray, Mr. Branghton, have the goodneſs to give up this plan; I know but very little of his Lordſhip, and cannot, upon any account, take ſo great a liberty."

"Don't ſay nothing about it," ſaid Ma-

dame Duval, "for I shall have it my own way: so if *you* won't call the coachman, Sir, I'll promise you I'll call him myself."

The footman, very impertinently, laughed and turned upon his heel. Madame Duval, extremely irritated, ran out in the rain, and beckoned the coachman, who instantly obeyed her summons. Shocked beyond all expression, I flew after her, and entreated her with the utmost earnestness, to let us return in a hackney-coach:—but oh!—she is impenetrable to persuasion! She told the man she wanted him to carry her directly to town, and that she would answer for him to Lord Orville. The man, with a sneer, thanked her, but said he should answer for himself; and was driving off, when another footman came up to him, with information that his Lord was gone into Kensington Palace, and would not want him for an hour or two.

"Why then, friend," said Mr. Branghton, (for we were followed by all the party) "where will be the great harm of your taking us to town?"

"Besides," said the son, "I'll promise you a pot of beer for my own share."

These speeches had no other answer from the coachman than a loud laugh, which was echoed by the insolent footmen. I rejoiced at their resistance, though I was certain,

that if their Lord had witneſſed their impertinence, they would have been inſtantly diſmiſſed his ſervice.

"*Pardi*," cried Madame Duval, "if I don't think all the footmen are the moſt impudenteſt fellows in the kingdom! But I'll promiſe you I'll have your maſter told of your airs, ſo you'll get no good by 'em."

"Why pray," ſaid the coachman, rather alarmed, "did my Lord give you leave to uſe the coach?"

"It's no matter for that," anſwered ſhe; "I'm ſure if he's a gentleman, he'd let us have it ſooner than we ſhould be wet to the ſkin: but I'll promiſe you he ſhall know how ſaucy you've been, for this young lady knows him very well."

"Ay, that ſhe does," ſaid Miſs Polly; "and ſhe's danced with him too."

Oh how I repented my fooliſh miſmanagement! The men bit their lips, and looked at one another in ſome confuſion. This was perceived by our party, who, taking advantage of it, proteſted they would write Lord Orville word of their ill behaviour without delay. This quite ſtartled them, and one of the footmen offered to run to the palace and aſk his Lord's permiſſion for our having the carriage.

This propoſal really made me tremble; and the Branghtons all hung back upon it: but

but Madame Duval is never to be diſſuaded from a ſcheme ſhe has once formed. "Do ſo," cried ſhe, "and give this child's compliments to your maſter, and tell him, as we ha'n't no coach here, we ſhould be glad to go juſt as far as Holborn in his."

"No, no, no!" cried I; "don't go,—I know nothing of his Lordſhip,—I ſend no meſſage,—I have nothing to ſay to him!"

The men, very much perplexed, could with difficulty reſtrain themſelves from reſuming their impertinent mirth. Madame Duval ſcolded me very angrily, and then deſired them to go directly. "Pray, then," ſaid the coachman, "what name is to be given to my Lord?"

"Anville," anſwered Madame Duval, "tell him Miſs Anville wants the coach; the young lady he danced with once."

I was really in an agony; but the winds could not have been more deaf to me, than thoſe to whom I pleaded! and therefore the footman, urged by the repeated threats of Madame Duval, and perhaps recollecting the name himſelf, actually went to the palace with this ſtrange meſſage!

He returned in a few minutes, and bowing to me with the greateſt reſpect, ſaid, "My Lord deſires his compliments, and his carriage will be always at Miſs Anville's ſervice."

I was so much affected by this politeness, and chagrined at the whole affair, that I could scarce refrain from tears. Madame Duval and the Miss Branghtons eagerly jumped into the coach, and desired me to follow. I would rather have submitted to the severest punishment;—but all resistance was vain.

During the whole ride, I said not a word; however, the rest of the party were so talkative, that my silence was very immaterial. We stopped at our lodgings; but when Madame Duval and I alighted, the Branghtons asked if they could not be carried on to Snow-Hill? The servants, now all civility, made no objection. Remonstrances from me, would, I too well knew, be fruitless; and therefore, with a heavy heart, I retired to my room, and left them to their own direction.

Seldom have I passed a night in greater uneasiness:—so lately to have cleared myself in the good opinion of Lord Orville,—so soon to forfeit it!—to give him reason to suppose I presumed to boast of his acquaintance!—to publish his having danced with me!—to take with him a liberty I should have blushed to have taken with the most intimate of my friends!—to treat with such impertinent freedom one who has honoured *me* with such distinguished respect!—indeed,

—indeed, Sir, I could have met with no accident that would ſo cruelly have tormented me!

If ſuch were, then, my feelings, imagine, —for I cannot deſcribe, what I ſuffered during the ſcene I am now going to write.

This morning, while I was alone in the dining-room, young Branghton called. He entered with a moſt important air, and ſtrutting up to me, ſaid, "Miſs, *Lord Orville* ſends his compliments to you."

"Lord Orville!"—repeated I, much amazed.

"Yes, Miſs, Lord Orville; for *I* know his Lordſhip now, as well as you.—And a very civil gentleman he is, for all he's a Lord."

"For Heaven's ſake," cried I, "explain yourſelf."

"Why you muſt know, Miſs, after we left you, we met with a little misfortune; but I don't mind it now, for it's all turned out for the beſt: but, juſt as we were a going up Snow Hill, plump we comes againſt a cart, with ſuch a jogg it almoſt pulled the coach-wheel off; however, that i'n't the worſt, for as I went to open the door in a hurry, a thinking the coach would be broke down, as ill-luck would have it, I never minded that the glaſs was up, and

ſo I poked my head fairly through it. Only ſee, Miſs, how I've cut my forehead!"

A much worſe accident to himſelf, would not, I believe, at that moment, have given me any concern for him: however, he proceeded with his account, for I was too much confounded to interrupt him.

"Goodneſs, Miſs, we were in ſuch a ſtew, us, and the ſervants, and all, as you can't think; for, beſides the glaſs being broke, the coachman ſaid how the coach would n't be ſafe to go back to Kenſington. So we did n't know what to do; however, the footmen ſaid they'd go and tell his Lordſhip what had happened. So then father grew quite uneaſy, like, for fear of his Lordſhip's taking offence, and prejudicing us in our buſineſs: ſo he ſaid I ſhould go this morning and aſk his pardon, 'cauſe of having broke the glaſs. So then I aſked the footmen the direction, and they told me he lived in Berkeley-ſquare; ſo this morning I went,—and I ſoon found out the houſe."

"You did!" cried I, quite out of breath with apprehenſion.

"Yes, Miſs, and a very fine houſe it is. Did you ever ſee it?"

"No."

"No!—why then, Miſs, I know more

of his Lordſhip than you do, for all you knew him firſt. So, when I came to the door, I was in a peck of troubles, a thinking what I ſhould ſay to him; however, the ſervants had no mind I ſhould ſee him, for they told me he was buſy, but I might leave my meſſage. So I was juſt a coming away, when I bethought myſelf to ſay I come from you."

"From *me!*—"

"Yes, Miſs,—for you know why ſhould I have ſuch a long walk as that for nothing? So I ſays to the porter, ſays I, tell his Lordſhip, ſays I, one wants to ſpeak to him as comes from one Miſs Anville, ſays I."

"Good God," cried I, "and by what authority did you take ſuch a liberty?"

"Goodneſs, Miſs, don't be in ſuch a hurry, for you'll be as glad as me when you hear how well it all turned out. So then they made way for me, and ſaid his Lordſhip would ſee me directly; and there I was led through ſuch a heap of ſervants, and ſo many rooms, that my heart quite miſgave me; for I thought, thinks I, he'll be ſo proud he'll hardly let me ſpeak; but he's no more proud than I am, and he was as civil as if I'd been a lord myſelf. So then I ſaid, I hoped he would n't take it amiſs about the glaſs, for it was quite an

accident; but he bid me not mention it, for it did not ſignify. And then he ſaid he hoped you got ſafe home, and was n't frightened; and ſo I ſaid yes, and I gave your duty to him."

"My duty to him!" exclaimed I,—"and who gave you leave?—who deſired you?"

"O, I did it of my own head, juſt to make him think I came from you. But I ſhould have told you before how the footman ſaid he was going out of town to-morrow evening, and that his ſiſter was ſoon to be married, and that he was a ordering a heap of things for that; ſo it come into my head, as he was ſo affable, that I'd aſk him for his cuſtom. So I ſays, ſays I, my Lord, ſays I, if your Lordſhip i'n't engaged particularly, my father is a ſilverſmith, and he'd be very proud to ſerve you, ſays I; and Miſs Anville, as danced with you, is his couſin, and ſhe's my couſin too, and ſhe'd be very much obligated to you, I'm ſure."

"You'll drive me wild," (cried I, ſtarting from my ſeat) "you have done me an irreparable injury;—but I will hear no more!"—and then I ran into my own room.

I was half frantic, I really raved; the good opinion of Lord Orville ſeemed now irretrievably

irretrievably loſt: a faint hope, which in the morning I had vainly encouraged, that I might ſee him again, and explain the tranſaction, wholly vaniſhed, now I found he was ſo ſoon to leave town: and I could not but conclude that, for the reſt of my life, he would regard me as an object of utter contempt.

The very idea was a dagger to my heart!—I could not ſupport it, and—but I bluſh to proceed—I fear your diſapprobation, yet I ſhould not be conſcious of having merited it, but that the repugnance I feel to relate to you what I have done, makes me ſuſpect I muſt have erred. Will you forgive me, if I own that I *firſt* wrote an account of this tranſaction to Miſs Mirvan?—and that I even thought of *concealing* it from you?—Short-lived, however, was the ungrateful idea, and ſooner will I riſk the juſtice of your diſpleaſure, than unworthily betray your generous confidence.

You are now probably prepared for what follows—which is a letter—a haſty letter, that, in the height of my agitation, I wrote to Lord Orville.

"My Lord,

"I am ſo infinitely aſhamed of the application made yeſterday for your Lord-

ſhip's carriage in my name, and ſo greatly ſhocked at hearing how much it was injured, that I cannot forbear writing a few lines, to clear myſelf from the imputation of an impertinence which I bluſh to be ſuſpected of, and to acquaint you, that the requeſt for your carriage was made againſt my conſent, and the viſit with which you were importuned this morning, without my knowledge.

"I am inexpreſſibly concerned at having been the inſtrument, however innocently, of ſo much trouble to your Lordſhip; but I beg you to believe, that reading theſe lines is the only part of it which I have given voluntarily.

"I am, my Lord,

"Your Lordſhip's moſt humble ſervant,

"EVELINA ANVILLE."

I applied to the maid of the houſe to get this note conveyed to Berkeley-ſquare; but ſcarce had I parted with it, before I regretted having written at all, and I was flying down ſtairs to recover it, when the voice of Sir Clement Willoughby ſtopped me. As Madame Duval had ordered we ſhould be denied to him, I was obliged to return up ſtairs; and after he was gone, my application was too late, as the maid had given it to a porter.

My

My time did not pass very serenely while he was gone; however, he brought me no answer, but that Lord Orville was not at home. Whether or not he will take the trouble to send any;—or whether he will condescend to call;—or whether the affair will rest as it is, I know not;—but, in being ignorant, am most cruelly anxious.

LETTER XXIV.

Evelina in continuation.

July 4.

YOU may now, my dear Sir, send Mrs. Clinton for your Evelina with as much speed as she can conveniently make the journey, for no further opposition will be made to her leaving this town: happy had it perhaps been for her had she never entered it!

This morning Madame Duval desired me to go to Snow-hill, with an invitation to the Branghtons and Mr. Smith, to spend the evening with her: and she desired M. Du Bois, who breakfasted with us, to accompany me. I was very unwilling to obey her, as I neither wished to walk with M. Du Bois, nor yet to meet young Branghton. And, indeed, another, a yet more powerful

reaſon, added to my reluctance,—for I thought it poſſible that Lord Orville might ſend ſome anſwer, or perhaps might call, during my abſence; however, I did not dare diſpute her commands.

Poor M. Du Bois ſpoke not a word during our walk, which was, I believe, equally unpleaſant to us both. We found all the family aſſembled in the ſhop. Mr. Smith, the moment he perceived me, addreſſed himſelf to Miſs Branghton, whom he entertained with all the gallantry in his power. I rejoice to find that my conduct at the Hampſtead ball has had ſo good an effect. But young Branghton was extremely troubleſome, he repeatedly laughed in my face, and looked ſo impertinently ſignificant, that I was obliged to give up my reſerve to M. Du Bois, and enter into converſation with him, merely to avoid ſuch boldneſs.

"Miſs," ſaid Mr. Branghton, "I'm ſorry to hear from my ſon that you was n't pleaſed with what we did about that Lord Orville; but I ſhould like to know what it was you found fault with, for we did all for the beſt."

"Goodneſs!" cried the ſon, "why if you'd ſeen Miſs, you'd have been ſurpriſed —ſhe went out of the room quite in a huff, like."

"It is too late, now," ſaid I, "to reaſon upon

upon this subject; but, for the future, I must take the liberty to request, that my name may never be made use of without my knowledge. May I tell Madame Duval that you will do her the favour to accept her invitation?"

"As to me, Ma'am," said Mr. Smith, "I am much obliged to the old lady, but I've no mind to be taken in by her again; you'll excuse me, Ma'am."

All the rest promised to come, and I then took leave: but as I left the shop, I heard Mr. Branghton say, "Take courage, Tom, she's only coy." And, before I had walked ten yards, the youth followed.

I was so much offended that I would not look at him, but began to converse with M. Du Bois, who was now more lively than I had ever before seen him; for, most unfortunately, he misinterpreted the reason of my attention to him.

The first intelligence I received when I came home, was, that two gentlemen had called, and left cards. I eagerly enquired for them, and read the names of Lord Orville and Sir Clement Willoughby. I by no means regretted that I missed seeing the latter, but perhaps I may all my life regret that I missed the former, for probably he has now left town,—and I may see him no more!

"My

"My goodneſs!" cried young Branghton, rudely looking over me, "only think of that Lord's coming all this way! It's my belief he'd got ſome order ready for father, and ſo he'd a mind to call and aſk you if I'd told him the truth."

"Pray, Betty," cried I, "how long has he been gone?"

"Not two minutes, Ma'am."

"Why then I'll lay you any wager," ſaid young Branghton, "he ſaw you and I a-walking up Holborn Hill!"

"God forbid!" cried I, impatiently; and, too much chagrined to bear with any more of his remarks, I ran up ſtairs: but I heard him ſay to M. Du Bois, "Miſs is ſo *uppiſh* this morning, that I think I had better not ſpeak to her again."

I wiſh M. Du Bois had taken the ſame reſolution; but he choſe to follow me into the dining-room, which he found empty.

"*Vous ne l'aimez donc pas, ce garçon, Mademoiſelle!*" cried he.

"Me!" cried I, "no, I deteſt him!" for I was quite ſick at heart.

"*Ah, tu me rends la vie!*" cried he, and flinging himſelf at my feet, he had juſt caught my hand, as the door was opened by Madame Duval.

Haſtily, and with marks of guilty confuſion in his face, he aroſe; but the rage of

of that lady quite amazed me! advancing to the retreating M. Du Bois, she began, in French, an attack which her extreme wrath and wonderful volubility almost rendered unintelligible; yet I understood but too much, since her reproaches convinced me she had herself proposed being the object of his affection.

He defended himself in a weak and evasive manner, and upon her commanding him from her sight, very readily withdrew: and then, with yet greater violence, she upbraided me with having *seduced* his heart, called me an ungrateful, designing girl, and protested she would neither take me to Paris, nor any more interest herself in my affairs, unless I would instantly agree to marry young Branghton.

Frightened as I had been at her vehemence, this proposal restored all my courage; and I frankly told her that in this point I never could obey her. More irritated than ever, she ordered me to quit the room.

Such is the present situation of affairs. I shall excuse myself from seeing the Branghtons this afternoon: indeed, I never wish to see them again. I am sorry, however innocently, that I have displeased Madame Duval, yet I shall be very glad to quit this town, for I believe it does not, now, contain

tain one perſon I ever wiſh to again meet. Had I but ſeen Lord Orville, I ſhould regret nothing: I could then have more fully explained what I ſo haſtily wrote; yet it will always be a pleaſure to me to recollect that he called, ſince I flatter myſelf it was in conſequence of his being ſatisfied with my letter.

Adieu, my dear Sir; the time now approaches when I hope once more to receive your bleſſing, and to owe all my joy, all my happineſs, to your kindneſs.

LETTER XXV.

Mr. Villars to Evelina.

Berry Hill, July 7.

WELCOME, thrice welcome, my darling Evelina, to the arms of the trueſt, the fondeſt of your friends! Mrs. Clinton, who ſhall haſten to you with theſe lines, will conduct you directly hither, for I can conſent no longer to be parted from the child of my boſom!—the comfort of my age!—the ſweet ſolace of all my infirmities! Your worthy friends at Howard Grove muſt pardon me that I rob them of the viſit you propoſed to make them before your

your return to Berry Hill, for I find my fortitude unequal to a longer ſeparation.

I have much to ſay to you, many comments to make upon your late letters, ſome parts of which give me no little uneaſineſs; but I will reſerve my remarks for our future converſations. Haſten, then, to the ſpot of thy nativity, the abode of thy youth, where never yet care or ſorrow had power to annoy thee;—O that they might ever be baniſhed this peaceful dwelling!

Adieu, my deareſt Evelina! I pray but that thy ſatisfaction at our approaching meeting may bear any compariſon with mine!

ARTHUR VILLARS.

LETTER XXVI.

Evelina to Miſs Mirvan.

Berry Hill, July 14.

MY ſweet Maria will be much ſurpriſed, and, I am willing to flatter myſelf, concerned, when, inſtead of her friend, ſhe receives this letter;—this cold, this inanimate letter, which will but ill expreſs the feelings of the heart which indites it.

When I wrote to you laſt Friday, I was in

in hourly expectation of seeing Mrs. Clinton, with whom I intended to have set out for Howard Grove; Mrs. Clinton came, but my plan was necessarily altered, for she brought me a letter,—the sweetest that ever was penned, from the best and kindest friend that ever orphan was blest with, requiring my immediate attendance at Berry Hill.

I obeyed,—and pardon me if I own I obeyed without reluctance; after so long a separation, should I not else have been the most ungrateful of mortals?—And yet,—oh Maria? though I *wished* to leave London, the gratification of my wish afforded me no happiness! and though I felt an impatience inexpressible to return hither, no words, no language can explain the heaviness of heart with which I made the journey. I believe you would hardly have known me;—indeed, I hardly know myself. Perhaps had I first seen *you*, in your kind and sympathizing bosom I might have ventured to have reposed every secret of my soul; and then—but let me pursue my journal.

Mrs. Clinton delivered Madame Duval a letter from Mr. Villars, which requested her leave for my return, and, indeed, it was very readily accorded: yet, when she found, by my willingness to quit town, that M. Du Bois was really indifferent to me,

ſhe ſomewhat ſoftened in my favour, and declared that, but for puniſhing his folly in thinking of ſuch a child, ſhe would not have conſented to my being again buried in the country.

All the Branghtons called to take leave of me: but I will not write a word more about them; indeed I cannot with any patience think of that family, to whoſe forwardneſs and impertinence is owing all the uneaſineſs I at this moment ſuffer!

So great was the depreſſion of my ſpirits upon the road, that it was with difficulty I could perſuade the worthy Mrs. Clinton I was not ill: but alas, the ſituation of my mind was ſuch as would have rendered any mere bodily pain, by compariſon, even enviable!

And yet, when we arrived at Berry Hill,—when the chaiſe ſtopped at this place,—how did my heart throb with joy! And when, through the window, I beheld the deareſt, the moſt venerable of men, with uplifted hands, returning, as I doubt not, thanks for my ſafe arrival,—good God! I thought it would have burſt my boſom!—I opened the chaiſe-door myſelf, I flew,—for my feet did not ſeem to touch the ground,—into the parlour; he had riſen to meet me, but the moment I appeared, he ſunk into his chair, uttering with a deep

ſigh,

ſigh, though his face *beamed* with delight, "My God, I thank thee!"

I ſprung forward, and with a pleaſure that bordered upon agony, I embraced his knees, I kiſſed his hands, I wept over them, but could not ſpeak: while he, now raiſing his eyes in thankfulneſs towards heaven, now bowing down his reverend head, and folding me in his arms, could ſcarce articulate the bleſſings with which his kind and benevolent heart overflowed.

O Miſs Mirvan, to be ſo beloved by the beſt of men,—ſhould I not be happy?—Should I have one wiſh ſave that of meriting his goodneſs?—Yet think me not ungrateful; indeed I am not, although the internal ſadneſs of my mind unfits me, at preſent, for enjoying as I ought the bounties of Providence.

I cannot journaliſe; cannot arrange my ideas into order.

How little has ſituation to do with happineſs! I had flattered myſelf that, when reſtored to Berry Hill, I ſhould be reſtored to tranquillity: far otherwiſe have I found it, for never yet had tranquillity and Evelina ſo little intercourſe.

I bluſh for what I have written. Can you, Maria, forgive my gravity? but I reſtrain it ſo much and ſo painfully in the preſence of Mr. Villars, that I know not

how to deny myself the consolation of indulging it to you.

Adieu, my dear Miss Mirvan.

Yet one thing I must add; do not let the seriousness of this letter deceive you; do not impute to a wrong cause the melancholy I confess, by supposing that the heart of your friend mourns a too great susceptibility; no, indeed! believe me it never was, never can be, more assuredly her own than at this moment. So witness in all truth,

Your affectionate

EVELINA.

You will make my excuses to the honoured Lady Howard, and to your dear mother.

LETTER XXVII.

Evelina in continuation.

Berry Hill, July 21.

YOU accuse me of mystery, and charge me with reserve: I cannot doubt but I must have merited the accusation;—yet, to clear myself,—you know not how painful will be the task. But I cannot resist your kind entreaties,—indeed, I do not wish to resist them, for your friendship and affection

affection will ſoothe my chagrin. Had it ariſen from any other cauſe, not a moment would I have deferred the communication you aſk;—but, as it is, I would, were it poſſible, not only conceal it from all the world, but endeavour to diſbelieve it myſelf. Yet, ſince I *muſt* tell you, why trifle with your impatience?

I know not how to come to the point; twenty times have I attempted it in vain;—but I will *force* myſelf to proceed.

Oh, Miſs Mirvan, could you ever have believed, that one who ſeemed formed as a pattern for his fellow-creatures, as a model of perfection,—one whoſe elegance ſurpaſſed all deſcription,—whoſe ſweetneſs of manners diſgraced all compariſon,—Oh, Miſs Mirvan, could you ever have believed that *Lord Orville* would have treated me with indignity?

Never, never again will I truſt to appearances,—never confide in my own weak judgment,—never believe that perſon to be good, who ſeems to be amiable! What cruel maxims are we taught by a knowledge of the world!—But while my own reflections abſorb me, I forget you are ſtill in ſuſpenſe.

I had juſt finiſhed the laſt letter which I wrote to you from London, when the maid of the houſe brought me a note. It was

given

given to her, she said, by a footman, who told her he would call the next day for an answer.

This note,—but let it speak for itself.

"*To Miss Anville.*

"With transport, most charming of thy sex, did I read the letter with which you yesterday morning favoured me. I am sorry the affair of the carriage should have given you any concern, but I am highly flattered by the anxiety you express so kindly. Believe me, my lovely girl, I am truly sensible of the honour of your good opinion, and feel myself deeply penetrated with love and gratitude. The correspondence you have so sweetly commenced I shall be proud of continuing, and I hope the strong sense I have of the favour you do me, will prevent your withdrawing it. Assure yourself that I desire nothing more ardently, than to pour forth my thanks at your feet, and to offer those vows which are so justly the tribute of your charms and accomplishments. In your next, I entreat you to acquaint me how long you shall remain in town. The servant whom I shall commission to call for an answer, has orders to ride post with it to me. My impatience for his arrival will be very great, though inferior

to

to that with which I burn, to tell you, in perſon, how much I am, my ſweet girl,

Your grateful admirer,

ORVILLE."

What a letter! how has my proud heart ſwelled, every line I have copied! What I wrote to him you know; tell me then, my dear friend, do you think it merited ſuch an anſwer?—and that I have deſervedly incurred the liberty he has taken? I meant nothing but a ſimple apology, which I thought as much due to my own character, as to his; yet, by the conſtruction he ſeems to have put upon it, ſhould you not have imagined it contained the avowal of ſentiments which might, indeed, have provoked his contempt?

The moment the letter was delivered to me, I retired to my own room to read it, and ſo eager was my firſt peruſal, that,—I am aſhamed to own it gave me no ſenſation but of delight. Unſuſpicious of any impropriety from Lord Orville, I perceived not immediately the impertinence it implied,—I only marked the expreſſions of his own regard; and I was ſo much ſurpriſed, that I was unable, for ſome time, to compoſe myſelf, or read it again,—I could only walk up and down the room, repeating to myſelf, "Good God, is it poſſible?

possible?—am I, then, loved by Lord Orville?"

But this dream was soon over, and I awoke to far different feelings; upon a second reading, I thought every word changed,—it did not seem the same letter,—I could not find one sentence that I could look at without blushing: my astonishment was extreme, and it was succeeded by the utmost indignation.

If, as I am very ready to acknowledge, I erred in writing to Lord Orville, was it for *him* to punish the error? If he was offended, could he not have been silent? If he thought my letter ill-judged, should he not have pitied my ignorance? have considered my youth, and allowed for my inexperience?

Oh Maria, how have I been deceived in this man! Words have no power to tell the high opinion I had of him; to that was owing the unfortunate solicitude which prompted my writing,—a solicitude I must for ever repent!

Yet perhaps I have rather reason to rejoice than to grieve, since this affair has shewn me his real disposition, and removed that partiality, which, covering his every imperfection, left only his virtues and good qualities exposed to view. Had the deception continued much longer, had my mind

received any additional prejudice in his favour, who knows whither my miſtaken ideas might have led me? Indeed, I fear I was in greater danger than I apprehended, or can now think of without trembling,—for oh, if this weak heart of mine had been penetrated with too deep an impreſſion of his merit,—my peace and happineſs had been loſt for ever!

I would fain encourage more chearful thoughts, fain drive from my mind the melancholy that has taken poſſeſſion of it,—but I cannot ſucceed; for, added to the humiliating feelings which ſo powerfully oppreſs me, I have yet another cauſe of concern;—alas, my dear Maria, I have broken the tranquillity of the beſt of men!

I have never had the courage to ſhew him this cruel letter: I could not bear ſo greatly to depreciate in his opinion, one whom I had, with infinite anxiety, raiſed in it myſelf. Indeed, my firſt determination was to confine my chagrin totally to my own boſom; but your friendly enquiries have drawn it from me; and now I wiſh I had made no concealment from the beginning, ſince I know not how to account for a gravity which not all my endeavours can entirely hide or repreſs.

My greateſt apprehenſion is, leſt he ſhould imagine that my reſidence in London

don has given me a diſtaſte to the country. Every body I ſee takes notice of my being altered, and looking pale and ill. I ſhould be very indifferent to all ſuch obſervations, did I not perceive that they draw upon me the eyes of Mr. Villars, which gliſten with affectionate concern.

This morning, in ſpeaking of my London expedition, he mentioned Lord Orville. I felt ſo much diſturbed, that I would inſtantly have changed the ſubject; but he would not allow me, and, very unexpectedly, he began his panegyric, extolling, in ſtrong terms, his manly and honourable behaviour in regard to the Mary-bone adventure. My cheeks glowed with indignation every word he ſpoke;—ſo lately as I had myſelf fancied him the nobleſt of his ſex, now that I was ſo well convinced of my miſtake, I could not bear to hear his undeſerved praiſes uttered by one ſo really good, ſo unſuſpecting, ſo pure of heart!

What he thought of my ſilence and uneaſineſs I fear to know, but I hope he will mention the ſubject no more. I will not, however, with ungrateful indolence, give way to a ſadneſs which I find infectious to him who merits the moſt chearful exertion of my ſpirits. I am thankful that he has forborne to probe my wound, and I will endeavour to heal it by the conſciouſneſs

that I have not deserved the indignity I have received. Yet I cannot but lament to find myself in a world so deceitful, where we must suspect what we see, distrust what we hear, and doubt even what we feel!

LETTER XXVIII.

Evelina in continuation.

Berry Hill, July 29.

I Must own myself somewhat distressed how to answer your raillery: yet believe me, my dear Maria, your suggestions are those of *fancy*, not of *truth*. I am unconscious of the weakness you suspect; yet, to dispel your doubts, I will animate myself more than ever to conquer my chagrin, and to recover my spirits.

You wonder, you say, since my *heart* takes no part in this affair, why it should make me so unhappy? And can you, acquainted as you are with the high opinion I entertained of Lord Orville, can you wonder that so great a disappointment in his character should affect me? indeed, had so strange a letter been sent to me from *any* body, it could not have failed shocking me; how much more sensibly, then, must I feel such

such an affront, when received from the man in the world I had imagined least capable of giving it?

You are glad I made no reply; assure yourself, my dear friend, had this letter been the most respectful that could be written, the clandestine air given to it, by his proposal of sending his servant for my answer, instead of having it directed to his house, would effectually have prevented my writing. Indeed, I have an aversion the most sincere to all mysteries, all private actions; however foolishly and blameably, in regard to this letter, I have deviated from the open path which, from my earliest infancy, I was taught to tread.

He talks of my having *commenced a correspondence* with him; and could Lord Orville indeed believe I had such a design? believe me so forward, so bold, so strangely ridiculous? I know not if his man called or not, but I rejoice that I quitted London before he came, and without leaving any message for him. What, indeed, could I have said? it would have been a condescension very unmerited to have taken any, the least notice of such a letter.

Never shall I cease to wonder how he could write it. Oh, Maria, what, what could induce him so causelessly to wound and affront one who would sooner have died

than wilfully offended *him?* — How mortifying a freedom of ſtyle! how cruel an implication conveyed by his *thanks*, and expreſſions of gratitude! Is it not aſtoniſhing, that any man can *appear* ſo modeſt, who is ſo vain.

Every hour I regret the ſecrecy I have obſerved with my beloved Mr. Villars; I know not what bewitched me, but I felt, at firſt, a repugnance to publiſhing this affair that I could not ſurmount,—and now, I am aſhamed of confeſſing that I have any thing to confeſs! Yet I deſerve to be puniſhed for the falſe delicacy which occaſioned my ſilence; ſince, if Lord Orville himſelf was contented to forfeit his character, was it for me, almoſt at the expence of my own, to ſupport it?

Yet I believe I ſhould be very eaſy, now the firſt ſhock is over, and now that I ſee the whole affair, with the reſentment it merits, did not all my good friends in this neighbourhood, who think me extremely altered, teaze me about my gravity, and torment Mr. Villars with obſervations upon my dejection, and falling away. The ſubject is no ſooner ſtarted, than a deep gloom overſpreads his venerable countenance, and he looks at me with a tenderneſs ſo melancholy, that I know not how to endure the conſciouſneſs of exciting it.

Mrs.

Mrs. Selwyn, a lady of large fortune, who lives about three miles from Berry Hill, and who has always honoured me with very diſtinguiſhing marks of regard, is going, in a ſhort time, to Briſtol, and has propoſed to Mr. Villars to take me with her, for the recovery of my health. He ſeemed very much diſtreſſed whether to conſent or refuſe; but I, without any heſitation, warmly oppoſed the ſcheme, proteſting my health could no where be better than in this pure air. He had the goodneſs to thank me for this readineſs to ſtay with him: but he is all goodneſs! Oh that it were in my power to be, indeed, what in the kindneſs of his heart he has called me, the comfort of his age, and ſolace of his infirmities!

Never do I wiſh to be again ſeparated from him. If here I am grave, elſewhere I ſhould be unhappy. In his preſence, with a very little exertion, all the chearfulneſs of my diſpoſition ſeems ready to return; the benevolence of his countenance reanimates, the harmony of his temper compoſes, the purity of his character edifies me! I owe to him every thing; and, far from finding my debt of gratitude a weight, the firſt pride, firſt pleaſure of my life is the recollection of the obligations conferred upon me by a goodneſs ſo unequalled.

Once, indeed, I thought there existed another,—who, when *time had wintered o'er his locks*, would have shone forth among his fellow-creatures, with the same brightness of worth which dignifies my honoured Mr. Villars; a brightness, how superior in value to that which results from mere quickness of parts, wit, or imagination! a brightness, which, not contented with merely diffusing smiles, and gaining admiration from the sallies of the spirits, reflects a real and a glorious lustre upon all mankind! Oh how great was my error! how ill did I judge! how cruelly have I been deceived!

I will not go to Bristol, though Mrs. Selwyn is very urgent with me;—but I desire not to see any more of the world; the few months I have already passed in it, have sufficed to give me a disgust even to its name.

I hope, too, I shall see Lord Orville no more; accustomed, from my first knowledge of him, to regard him as a *being superior to his race*, his presence, perhaps, might banish my resentment, and I might forget his ill conduct,—for oh, Maria!—I should not know how to see *Lord Orville*—and to think of displeasure!

As a sister I loved him,—I could have entrusted him with every thought of my heart, had he deigned to wish my confi-

dence;

dence; so steady did I think his honour, so *feminine* his delicacy, and so amiable his nature! I have a thousand times imagined that the whole study of his life, and whole purport of his reflections, tended solely to the good and happiness of others:—but I will talk,—write,—think of him no more!

Adieu, my dear friend!

LETTER XXIX.

Evelina in continuation.

Berry Hill, August 10.

YOU complain of my silence, my dear Miss Mirvan,—but what have I to write? Narrative does not offer, nor does a lively imagination supply the deficiency. I have, however, at present, sufficient matter for a letter, in relating a conversation I had yesterday with Mr. Villars.

Our breakfast had been the most chearful we have had since my return hither; and, when it was over, he did not, as usual, retire to his study, but continued to converse with me while I worked. We might, probably, have passed all the morning thus sociably, but for the entrance of a farmer,

who came to solicit advice concerning some domestic affairs. They withdrew together into the study.

The moment I was alone, my spirits failed me; the exertion with which I had supported them, had fatigued my mind; I flung away my work, and leaning my arms on the table, gave way to a train of disagreeable reflections, which, bursting from the restraint that had smothered them, filled me with unusual sadness.

This was my situation, when, looking towards the door, which was open, I perceived Mr. Villars, who was earnestly regarding me. "Is Farmer Smith gone, Sir?" cried I, hastily rising, and snatching up my work.

"Don't let me disturb you," said he, gravely; "I will go again to my study."

"Will you, Sir?—I was in hopes you were coming to sit here."

"In hopes!—and why, Evelina, should you hope it?"

This question was so unexpected, that I knew not how to answer it; but, as I saw he was moving away, I followed, and begged him to return. "No, my dear, no," said he, with a forced smile, "I only interrupt your meditations."

Again I knew not what to say; and while I hesitated, he retired. My heart was with him,

him, but I had not the courage to follow. The idea of an explanation, brought on in so serious a manner, frightened me. I recollected the inference *you* had drawn from my uneasiness, and I feared that he might make a similar interpretation.

Solitary and thoughtful, I passed the rest of the morning in my own room. At dinner I again attempted to be chearful; but Mr. Villars himself was grave, and I had not sufficient spirits to support a conversation merely by my own efforts. As soon as dinner was over he took a book, and I walked to the window. I believe I remained near an hour in this situation. All my thoughts were directed to considering how I might dispel the doubts which I apprehended Mr. Villars had formed, without acknowledging a circumstance which I had suffered so much pain merely to conceal. But, while I was thus planning for the future, I forgot the present; and so intent was I upon the subject which occupied me, that the strange appearance of my unusual inactivity and extreme thoughtfulness, never occurred to me. But when, at last, I recollected myself, and turned round, I saw that Mr. Villars, who had parted with his book, was wholly engrossed in attending to me. I started from my reverie, and,

hardly knowing what I said, asked if he had been reading?

He paused a moment, and then replied, "Yes, my child;—a book that both afflicts and perplexes me!"

He means *me*, thought I; and therefore I made no answer.

"What if we read it together?" continued he, "will you assist me to clear its obscurity?"

I knew not what to say, but I sighed, involuntarily, from the bottom of my heart. He rose, and, approaching me, said, with emotion, "My child, I can no longer be a silent witness of thy sorrow,—is not *thy* sorrow *my* sorrow?—and ought I to be a stranger to the cause, when I so deeply sympathise in the effect?

"Cause, Sir!" cried I, greatly alarmed, "what cause?—I don't know,—I can't tell—I—"

"Fear not," said he, kindly, "to unbosom thyself to me, my dearest Evelina; open to me thy whole heart,—it can have no feelings for which I will not make allowance. Tell me, therefore, what it is that thus afflicts us both, and who knows but I may suggest some means of relief?"

"You are too, too good," cried I, greatly embarrassed; "but indeed I know not what you mean."

"I see,"

"I see," said he, "it is painful to you to speak: suppose then, I endeavour to save you by guessing?"

"Impossible! impossible!" cried I, eagerly, "no one living could ever guess, ever suppose—" I stopped abruptly; for I then recollected I was acknowledging something *was* to be guessed: however, he noticed not my mistake.

"At least let me try," answered he, mildly; "perhaps I may be a better diviner than you imagine: if I guess every thing that is probable, surely I must approach near the real reason. Be honest, then, my love, and speak without reserve,—does not the country, after so much gaiety, so much variety, does it not appear insipid and tiresome?"

"No, indeed! I love it more than ever, and more than ever do I wish I had never, never quitted it!"

"Oh my child! that I had not permitted the journey! My judgment always opposed it, but my resolution was not proof against persuasion."

"I blush, indeed," cried I, "to recollect my earnestness;—but I have been my own punisher!"

"It is too late, now," answered he, "to reflect upon this subject; let us endeavour to avoid repentance for the time to come, and

and we ſhall not have erred without reaping ſome inſtruction." Then ſeating himſelf, and making me ſit by him, he continued: "I muſt now gueſs again; perhaps you regret the loſs of thoſe friends you knew in town,—perhaps you miſs their ſociety, and fear you may ſee them no more?—perhaps Lord Orville——"

I could not keep my ſeat, but riſing haſtily, ſaid, "Dear Sir, aſk me nothing more!—for I have nothing to own,—nothing to ſay;—my gravity has been merely accidental, and I can give no reaſon for it at all. Shall I fetch you another book?—or will you have this again?"

For ſome minutes he was totally ſilent, and I pretended to employ myſelf in looking for a book: at laſt, with a deep ſigh, "I ſee," ſaid he, "I ſee but too plainly, that though Evelina is returned,—I have loſt my child!"

"No, Sir, no," cried I, inexpreſſibly ſhocked, "ſhe is more your's than ever! Without you, the world would be a deſart to her, and life a burthen;—forgive her, then, and,—if you can,—condeſcend to be, once more, the confidant of all her thoughts."

"How highly I value, how greatly I wiſh for her confidence," returned he, "ſhe cannot but know;—yet to extort, to tear it from her,—my juſtice, my affection,

both revolt at the idea. I am sorry that I was so earnest with you;—leave me, my dear, leave me, and compose yourself;—we will meet again at tea."

"Do you then refuse to hear me?"

"No, but I abhor to compel you. I have long seen that your mind has been ill at ease, and mine has largely partaken of your concern: I forbore to question you, for I hoped that time, and absence from whatever excited your uneasiness, might best operate in silence: but, alas! your affliction seems only to augment,—your health declines,—your look alters,—Oh Evelina, my aged heart bleeds to see the change!—bleeds to behold the darling it had cherished, the prop it had reared for its support, when bowed down by years and infirmities, sinking itself under the pressure of internal grief!—struggling to hide, what it should seek to participate!—But go, my dear, go to your own room,—we both want composure, and we will talk of this matter some other time."

"Oh Sir," cried I, penetrated to the soul, "bid me not leave you!—think me not so lost to feeling, to gratitude—"

"Not a word of that," interrupted he; "it pains me you should think upon that subject; pains me you should ever remember that you have not a natural, an hereditary

tary right to every thing within my power. I meant not to affect you thus,—I hoped to have ſoothed you!—but my anxiety betrayed me to an urgency that has diſtreſſed you. Comfort yourſelf, my love, and doubt not but that time will ſtand your friend, and all will end well."

I burſt into tears: with difficulty had I ſo long reſtrained them; for my heart, while it glowed with tenderneſs and gratitude, was oppreſſed with a ſenſe of its own unworthineſs. "You are all, all goodneſs!" cried I, in a voice ſcarce audible, "little as I deſerve,—unable as I am to repay, ſuch kindneſs,—yet my whole ſoul feels,—thanks you for it!"

"My deareſt child," cried he, "I cannot bear to ſee thy tears;—for *my* ſake dry them,—ſuch a ſight is too much for me: think of that, Evelina, and take comfort, I charge thee!"

"Say then," cried I, kneeling at his feet, "ſay then that you forgive me! that you pardon my reſerve,—that you will again ſuffer me to tell you my moſt ſecret thoughts, and rely upon my promiſe never more to forfeit your confidence!—my father! my protector!—my ever-honoured—ever-loved—my beſt and only friend!—ſay you forgive your Evelina, and ſhe will ſtudy better to deſerve your goodneſs!"

He

He raiſed, he embraced me; he called me his ſole joy, his only earthly hope, and the child of his boſom! He folded me to his heart, and, while I wept from the fullneſs of mine, with words of ſweeteſt kindneſs and conſolation, he ſoothed and tranquiliſed me.

Dear to my remembrance will ever be that moment, when, baniſhing the reſerve I had ſo fooliſhly planned and ſo painfully ſupported, I was reſtored to the confidence of the beſt of men!

When, at length, we were again quietly and compoſedly ſeated by each other, and Mr. Villars waited for the explanation I had begged him to hear, I found myſelf extremely embarraſſed how to introduce the ſubject which muſt lead to it. He ſaw my diſtreſs, and, with a kind of benevolent pleaſantry, aſked me if I would let him *gueſs* any more? I aſſented in ſilence.

"Shall I, then, go back to where I left off?"

"If—if you pleaſe;—I believe ſo,—" ſaid I, ſtammering.

"Well then, my love, I think I was ſpeaking of the regret it was natural you ſhould feel upon quitting thoſe from whom you had received civility and kindneſs, with ſo little certainty of ever ſeeing them again, or being able to return their good offices? Theſe

These are circumstances that afford but melancholy reflections to young minds; and the affectionate disposition of my Evelina, open to all social feelings, must be hurt more than usual by such considerations.—You are silent, my dear?—Shall I name those whom I think most worthy the regret I speak of? We shall then see if our opinions coincide."

Still I said nothing, and he continued.

"In your London journal, nobody appears in a more amiable, a more respectable light, than Lord Orville, and perhaps——"

"I knew what you would say," cried I, hastily, "and I have long feared where your suspicions would fall; but indeed, Sir, you are mistaken: I hate Lord Orville,—he is the last man in the world in whose favour I should be prejudiced."

I stopped; for Mr. Villars looked at me with such infinite surprise, that my own warmth made me blush. "You *hate* Lord Orville!" repeated he.

I could make no answer, but took from my pocket-book the letter, and giving it to him, "See, Sir," said I, "how differently the same man can *talk* and *write!*"

He read it three times before he spoke; and then said, "I am so much astonished, that I know

know not what I read. When had you this letter?"

I told him. Again he read it; and, after considering its contents some time, said, "I can form but one conjecture concerning this most extraordinary performance: he must certainly have been intoxicated when he wrote it."

"Lord Orville intoxicated!" repeated I; "once I thought him a stranger to all intemperance,—but it is very possible, for I can believe any thing now."

"That a man who had behaved with so strict a regard to delicacy," continued Mr. Villars, "and who, as far as occasion had allowed, manifested sentiments the most honourable, should thus insolently, thus wantonly insult a modest young woman, in his perfect senses, I cannot think possible. But, my dear, you should have inclosed this letter in an empty cover, and have returned it to him again: such a resentment would at once have become *your* character, and have given him an opportunity, in some measure, of clearing his own. He could not well have read this letter the next morning, without being sensible of the impropriety of having written it."

Oh Maria! why had not I this thought? I might then have received some apology; the mortification would then have been *his*, not

not *mine*. It is true, he could not have reinſtated himſelf ſo highly in my opinion as I had once ignorantly placed him, ſince the conviction of ſuch intemperance would have levelled him with the reſt of his imperfect race; yet, my humbled pride might have been conſoled by his acknowledgments.

But why ſhould I allow myſelf to be humbled by a man who can ſuffer his reaſon to be thus abjectly debaſed, when I am exalted by one who knows no vice, and ſcarcely a failing,—but by hearſay? To think of his kindneſs, and reflect upon his praiſes, might animate and comfort me even in the midſt of affliction, "Your indignation," ſaid he, "is the reſult of virtue; you fancied Lord Orville was without fault—he had the appearance of infinite worthineſs, and you ſuppoſed his character accorded with his appearance: guileleſs yourſelf, how could you prepare againſt the duplicity of another? Your diſappointment has but been proportioned to your expectations, and you have chiefly owed its ſeverity to the innocence which hid its approach."

I will bid theſe words dwell ever in my memory, and they ſhall cheer, comfort, and enliven me! This converſation, though extremely affecting to me at the time it paſſed, has relieved my mind from much anxiety.

anxiety. Concealment, my dear Maria, is the foe of tranquillity: however I may err in future, I will never be disingenuous in acknowledging my errors. To you, and to Mr. Villars, I vow an unremitting confidence.

And yet, though I am more at ease, I am far from well: I have been some time writing this letter; but I hope I shall send you, soon, a more chearful one.

Adieu, my sweet friend. I entreat you not to acquaint even your dear mother with this affair; Lord Orville is a favourite with her, and why should I publish that he deserves not that honour?

LETTER XXX.

Evelina in continuation.

Bristol Hotwell, August 28.

YOU will be again surprised, my dear Maria, at seeing whence I date my letter: but I have been very ill, and Mr. Villars was so much alarmed, that he not only insisted upon my accompanying Mrs. Selwyn hither, but earnestly desired she would hasten her intended journey.

We

We travelled very slowly, and I did not find myself so much fatigued as I expected. We are situated upon a most delightful spot; the prospect is beautiful, the air pure, and the weather very favourable to invalids. I am already better, and I doubt not but I shall soon be well; as well, in regard to mere health, as I wish to be.

I cannot express the reluctance with which I parted from my revered Mr. Villars: it was not like that parting which, last April, preceded my journey to Howard Grove, when, all expectation and hope, though I wept, I rejoiced, and though I sincerely grieved to leave him, I yet wished to be gone: the sorrow I now felt was unmixed with any livelier sensation; expectation was vanished, and hope I had none! All that I held most dear upon earth I quitted, and that upon an errand to the success of which I was totally indifferent, the re-establishment of my health. Had it been to have seen my sweet Maria, or her dear mother, I should not have repined.

Mrs. Selwyn is very kind and attentive to me. She is extremely clever; her understanding, indeed, may be called *masculine*; but, unfortunately, her manners deserve the same epithet; for, in studying to acquire the knowledge of the other sex, she has lost all the softness of her own. In regard

gard to myself, however, as I have neither courage nor inclination to argue with her, I have never been personally hurt at her want of gentleness; a virtue which, nevertheless, seems so essential a part of the female character, that I find myself more awkward, and less at ease, with a woman who wants it, than I do with a man. She is not a favourite with Mr. Villars, who has often been disgusted at her unmerciful propensity to satire: but his anxiety that I should try the effect of the Bristol waters, overcame his dislike of committing me to her care. Mrs. Clinton is also here; so that I shall be as well attended as his utmost partiality could desire.

I will continue to write to you, my dear Miss Mirvan, with as much constancy as if I had no other correspondent; though during my absence from Berry Hill, my letters may, perhaps, be shortened on account of the minuteness of the journal which I must write to my beloved Mr. Villars: but you, who know his expectations, and how many ties bind me to fulfil them, will, I am sure, rather excuse any omission to yourself, than any negligence to him.

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.

Continuation from Vol. I.

Of PLAYS, with elegant Engravings, in the NEW ENGLISH THEATRE.

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26. OROONOKO; Mr. Savigny as Oroonoko.
27. George Barnwell; Mr. Brereton as Barnwell.
28. Tamerlane; Mr. Palmer and Miss Hopkins as Bajazet and Selima.
29. Venice Preserved; Mr. Bensley as Pierre.
30. Distrest Mother; Mrs. Hartley as Andromache, by Sherwin. Vignette by Signora Angelica Kauffman and Signior Bartolozzi.
31. Provok'd Husband; Mr. Macklin and Mr. Dunstall as Sir Francis Wronghead and John Moody.
32. Love makes a Man; Mr. Dodd as Clodio.
33. Drummer; Mr. Parsons and Miss Pope as Vellum and Abigail.
34. Careless Husband; Mrs. Abingdon as Lady Betty Modish.
35. Funeral; Mr. Clarke and Mr. Quick as Lord Brompton and Mr. Sable. Vignette by West and Byrne.
36. Earl of Essex; Mrs. Melmoth as Queen Elizabeth.
37. Barbarossa; Mr. Bensley and Miss Macklin as Barbarossa and Irene.
38. Mahomet; Mr. Bensley as Mahomet.
39. All for Love; Mrs. Yates as Cleopatra.
40. Jane Gray; Mrs Hartley as Jane Gray, by Sherwin. Vignette by Edwards and Hall.
41. Amphytrion; Mr. Woodward as Sosia.
42. Double Dealer; Mr. Palmer and Mrs. Gardiner as Careless and Lady Pliant.
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44. Double Gallant; Mrs. Abingdon as Lady Sadlife.
45. Constant Couple; Mrs. Barry as Sir Harry Wildair. Vignette by Signora Angelica Kauffman and Mr. Collier.
46. Siege of Damascus; Mr. Smith as Phocyas.
47. Theodosius; Mr. Wroughton as Theodosius.
48. Cato; Mrs. Hartley as Marcia.
49. Douglas; Mr. Lewis as Douglas.
50. Zara; Miss Young and Mr. Garrick as Zara and Lusignan. Vignette by West and Byrne.
51. City Wives Confederacy; Miss Pope as Corinna.
52. Country Wife; Miss P. Hopkins as Miss Peggy.
53. Minor; Mr. Foote as Mrs. Cole.
54. Wonder; Mr. Garrick as Don Felix.
55. Chances; Mr. Garrick as Don John. Vignette by Mortimer and Walker.
56. Medea; Mrs. Yates as Medea.
57. Grecian Daughter; Mr. J. Aikin as Phocion.
58. Roman Father; Mr. Henderson as Horatius.
59. Brothers; Mr. Garrick as Demetrius.
60. Isabella, or the Fatal Marriage; Mr. Henderson as Count Biron. Vignette by Mortimer and Hall.

I.Mortimer inv. F.Bartolozzi fculp.

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Memoirs Elizabeth Hamilton.

EVELINA,

OR, A

YOUNG LADY'S

ENTRANCE

INTO THE

WORLD.

IN A SERIES OF LETTERS.

THE SECOND EDITION.

VOL. III.

LONDON:

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M,DCC,LXXIX.

EVELINA,

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ENTRANCE

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IN A SERIES OF LETTERS.

THE SECOND EDITION.

VOL. III.

LONDON:

EVELINA.

LETTER I.

Evelina to the Rev. Mr. Villars.

Briſtol Hotwells, Sept. 12.

THE firſt fortnight that I paſſed here, was ſo quiet, ſo ſerene, that it gave me reaſon to expect a ſettled calm during my ſtay; but if I may now judge of the time to come, by the preſent ſtate of my mind, the calm will be ſucceeded by a ſtorm, of which I dread the violence!

This morning, in my way to the pump-room, with Mrs. Selwyn, we were both very much incommoded by three gentlemen, who were ſauntering by the ſide of the

Avon, laughing, and talking very loud, and lounging so disagreeably, that we knew not how to pass them. They all three fixed their eyes very boldly upon me, alternately looking under my hat, and whispering one another. Mrs. Selwyn assumed an air of uncommon sternness, and said, "You will please, Gentlemen, either to proceed yourselves, or to suffer us."

"Oh! Ma'am," cried one of them, "we will suffer *you*, with the greatest pleasure in life."

"You will suffer us *both*," answered she, "or I am much mistaken; you had better, therefore, make way quietly, for I should be sorry to give my servant the trouble of teaching you better manners."

Her commanding air struck them, yet they all chose to laugh, and one of them wished the fellow would begin his lesson, that he might have the pleasure of rolling him into the Avon; while another advancing to me with a freedom which made me start, said, "By my soul I did not know you!—but I am sure I cannot be mistaken;—had not I the honour of seeing you, once, at the Pantheon?"

I then recollected the nobleman who, at that place, had so much embarrassed me. I courtsied without speaking. They all bowed, and making, though in a very easy manner,

manner, an apology to Mrs. Selwyn, they ſuffered us to paſs on, but choſe to accompany us.

"And where," continued this Lord, "can you ſo long have hid yourſelf? do you know I have been in ſearch of you this age? I could neither find you out, nor hear of you: not a creature could inform me what was become of you. I cannot imagine where you could be immured. I was at two or three public places every night, in hopes of meeting you. Pray did you leave town?"

"Yes, my Lord."

"So early in the ſeaſon!—what could poſſibly induce you to go before the birth-day?"

"I had nothing, my Lord, to do with the birth-day."

"By my ſoul, all the women who *had*, may rejoice you were away. Have you been here any time?"

"Not above a fortnight, my Lord."

"A fortnight!—how unlucky that I did not meet you ſooner! but I have had a run of ill luck ever ſince I came. How long ſhall you ſtay?"

"Indeed, my Lord, I don't know."

"Six weeks, I hope; for I ſhall wiſh the place at the devil when you go."

"Do you, then, flatter yourſelf, my

Lord," said Mrs. Selwyn, who had hitherto listened in silent contempt, "that you shall see such a beautiful spot as this, when you visit the dominions of the devil?"

"Ha, ha, ha! Faith, my Lord," said one of his companions, who still walked with us, though the other had taken leave; "the Lady is rather hard upon you."

"Not at all," answered Mrs. Selwyn; "for as I cannot doubt but his Lordship's rank and interest will secure him a place there, it would be reflecting on his understanding, to suppose he should not wish to enlarge and beautify his dwelling."

Much as I was disgusted with this Lord, I must own Mrs. Selwyn's severity rather surprised me: but you, who have so often observed it, will not wonder she took so fair an opportunity of indulging her humour.

"As to *places*," returned he, totally unmoved, "I am so indifferent to them, that the devil take me if I care which way I go! *objects*, indeed, I am not so easy about; and therefore I expect that those angels with whose beauty I am so much enraptured in this world, will have the goodness to afford me some little consolation in the other."

"What, my Lord!" cried Mrs. Selwyn, "would you wish to degrade the habitation

bitation of your friend, by admitting into it the insipid company of the upper regions?"

"What do you do with yourself this evening?" said his Lordship, turning to me.

"I shall be at home, my Lord."

"O, à-propos—where are you?"

"Young ladies, my Lord," said Mrs. Selwyn, "are *no where*."

"Prithee," whispered his Lordship, "is that queer woman your mother?"

Good Heavens, Sir, what words for such a question!

"No, my Lord."

"Your maiden aunt, then?"

"No."

"Whoever she is, I wish she would mind her own affairs: I don't know what the devil a woman lives for after thirty; she is only in other folks way. Shall you be at the assembly?"

"I believe not, my Lord."

"No!—why then how in the world can you contrive to pass your time?"

"In a manner which your Lordship will think very extraordinary," cried Mrs. Selwyn; "for the young Lady *reads*."

"Ha, ha, ha! Egad, my Lord," cried the facetious companion, "you are got into bad hands."

"You had better, Madam," answered he, "attack Jack Coverley, here, for you will make nothing of me."

"Of *you*, my Lord!" cried she; "Heaven forbid I should ever entertain so idle an expectation! I only talk, like a silly woman, for the sake of talking; but I have by no means so low an opinion of your Lordship, as to suppose you vulnerable to censure."

"Do, pray, Ma'am," cried he, "turn to Jack Coverley; he's the very man for you;—he'd be a wit himself if he was not too modest."

"Prithee, my Lord, be quiet," returned the other; "if the Lady is contented to bestow all her favours upon *you*, why should you make such a point of my going snacks?"

"Don't be apprehensive, Gentlemen," said Mrs. Selwyn, drily, "I am not romantic,—I have not the least design of doing good to either of you."

"Have not you been ill since I saw you?" said his Lordship, again addressing himself to me.

"Yes, my Lord."

"I thought so; you are paler than you was, and I suppose that's the reason I did not recollect you sooner."

"Has not your Lordship too much gal-

gallantry," cried Mrs. Selwyn, "to diſcover a young lady's illneſs by her looks?"

"The devil a word can I ſpeak for that woman," ſaid he, in a low voice; "do, prithee, Jack, take her in hand."

"Excuſe me, my Lord!" anſwered Mr. Coverley.

"When ſhall I ſee you again?" continued his Lordſhip; "do you go to the pump-room every morning?"

"No, my Lord."

"Do you ride out?"

"No, my Lord."

Juſt then we arrived at the pump-room, and an end was put to our converſation, if it is not an abuſe of words to give ſuch a term to a ſtring of rude queſtions and free compliments.

He had not opportunity to ſay much more to me, as Mrs. Selwyn joined a large party, and I walked home between two ladies. He had, however, the curioſity to ſee us to the door.

Mrs. Selwyn was very eager to know how I had made acquaintance with this nobleman, whoſe manners ſo evidently announced the character of a confirmed libertine: I could give her very little ſatisfaction, as I was ignorant even of his name. But, in the afternoon, Mr. Ridge-

way the apothecary, gave us very ample information.

As his perſon was eaſily deſcribed, for he is remarkably tall, Mr. Ridgeway told us he was Lord Merton, a nobleman who is but lately come to his title, though he has already diſſipated more than half his fortune: a profeſſed admirer of beauty, but a man of moſt licentious character: that among men, his companions conſiſted chiefly of gamblers and jockies, and among women, he was rarely admitted.

"Well, Miſs Anville," ſaid Mrs. Selwyn, "I am glad I was not more civil to him. You may depend upon *me* for keeping him at a diſtance."

"O, Madam," ſaid Mr. Ridgeway, "he may now be admitted any where, for he is going to *reform*."

"Has he, under that notion, perſuaded any fool to marry him?"

"Not yet, Madam, but a marriage is expected to take place ſhortly: it has been ſome time in agitation, but the friends of the Lady have obliged her to wait till ſhe is of age: however, her brother, who has chiefly oppoſed the match, now that ſhe is near being at her own diſpoſal, is tolerably quiet. She is very pretty, and will have a large fortune. We expect her at the Wells every day."

"What

"What is her name?" ſaid Mrs. Selwyn.

"Larpent," anſwered he, "Lady Louiſa Larpent, ſiſter of Lord Orville."

"Lord Orville!" repeated I, all amazement.

"Yes, Ma'am; his Lordſhip is coming with her. I have had certain information. They are to be at the honourable Mrs. Beaumont's. She is a relation of my Lord's, and has a very fine houſe upon Clifton Hill."

His Lordſhip is coming with her!—Good God, what an emotion did thoſe words give me! How ſtrange, my dear Sir, that, juſt at this time, he ſhould viſit Briſtol! It will be impoſſible for me to avoid ſeeing him, as Mrs. Selwyn is very well acquainted with Mrs. Beaumont. Indeed, I have had an eſcape in not being under the ſame roof with him, for Mrs. Beaumont invited us to her houſe immediately upon our arrival; but the inconveniency of being ſo diſtant from the pump-room made Mrs. Selwyn decline her civility.

Oh that the firſt meeting was over!—or that I could quit Briſtol without ſeeing him!—inexpreſſibly do I dread an interview: ſhould the ſame impertinent freedom be expreſſed by his looks, which dictated his cruel letter, I ſhall not know how to

endure either him or myself. Had I but returned it, I should be easier, because my sentiments of it would then be known to him; but now, he can only gather them from my behaviour, and I tremble lest he should mistake my indignation for confusion!—lest he should misconstrue my reserve into embarrassment!—for how, my dearest Sir, how shall I be able totally to divest myself of the respect with which I have been used to think of him?—the pleasure with which I have been used to see him?

Surely he, as well as I, must recollect the letter at the moment of our meeting, and he will, probably, mean to gather my thoughts of it from my looks;—oh that they could but convey to him my real detestation of impertinence and vanity! then would he see how much he had mistaken my disposition when he imagined them my due.

There was a time when the very idea that such a man as Lord Merton should ever be connected with Lord Orville, would have both surprised and shocked me, and even yet I am pleased to hear of his repugnance to the marriage.

But how strange, that a man of so abandoned a character should be the choice of a sister of Lord Orville! and how strange that,

that, almoſt at the moment of the union, he ſhould be ſo importunate in gallantry to another woman! What a world is this we live in! how corrupt! how degenerate! well might I be contented to ſee no more of it! If I find that the *eyes* of Lord Orville agree with his *pen*,—I ſhall then think, that of all mankind, the only virtuous individual reſides at Berry Hill.

LETTER II.

Evelina in continuation.

Briſtol Hotwells, Sept. 16.

OH Sir, Lord Orville is ſtill himſelf! ſtill, what from the moment I beheld, I believed him to be—all that is amiable in man! and your happy Evelina, reſtored at once to ſpirits and tranquillity, is no longer ſunk in her own opinion, nor diſcontented with the world;—no longer, with dejected eyes, ſees the proſpect of paſſing her future days in ſadneſs, doubt, and ſuſpicion!—with revived courage ſhe now looks forward, and expects to meet with goodneſs, even among mankind:—though ſtill ſhe feels, as ſtrongly as ever, the folly of hoping,

hoping, in any *second* instance, to meet with *perfection*.

Your conjecture was certainly right; Lord Orville, when he wrote that letter, could not be in his senses. Oh that intemperance should have power to degrade so low, a man so noble!

This morning I accompanied Mrs. Selwyn to Clifton Hill, where, beautifully situated, is the house of Mrs. Beaumont. Most uncomfortable were my feelings during our walk, which was very slow, for the agitation of my mind made me more than usually sensible how weak I still continue. As we entered the house, I summoned all my resolution to my aid, determined rather to die than give Lord Orville reason to attribute my weakness to a wrong cause. I was happily relieved from my perturbation, when I saw Mrs. Beaumont was alone. We sat with her for, I believe, an hour without interruption, and then we saw a phaeton drive up to the gate, and a lady and gentleman alight from it.

They entered the parlour with the ease of people who were at home. The gentleman, I soon saw, was Lord Merton; he came shuffling into the room with his boots on, and his whip in his hand; and, having made something like a bow to Mrs. Beaumont, he turned towards me. His surprise

was

was very evident, but he took no manner of notice of me. He waited, I believe, to discover, first, what chance had brought me to that house, where he did not look much rejoiced at meeting me. He seated himself very quietly at the window, without speaking to any body.

Mean time, the lady, who seemed very young, hobbling rather than walking into the room, made a passing courtsie to Mrs. Beaumont, saying, "How are you, Ma'am?" and then, without noticing any body else, with an air of languor she flung herself upon a sofa, protesting, in a most affected voice, and speaking so softly she could hardly be heard, that she was fatigued to death. "Really, Ma'am, the roads are so monstrous dusty,—you can't imagine how troublesome the dust is to one's eyes!—and the sun, too, is monstrous disagreeable!—I dare say I shall be so tanned I sha'n't be fit to be seen this age. Indeed, my Lord, I won't go out with you any more, for you don't care where you take one."

"Upon my honour," said Lord Merton, "I took you the pleasanteſt ride in England; the fault was in the sun, not me."

"Your Lordship is in the right," said Mrs. Selwyn, "to transfer the fault to the

fun, becauſe it has ſo many excellencies to counterbalance partial inconveniences, that a *little* blame will not injure *that* in our eſtimation."

Lord Merton looked by no means delighted at this attack; which I believe ſhe would not ſo readily have made, but to revenge his neglect of us.

"Did you meet your brother, Lady Louiſa?" ſaid Mrs. Beaumont.

"No, Ma'am. Is he rode out this morning?"

I then found, what I had before ſuſpected, that this Lady was Lord Orville's ſiſter: how ſtrange, that ſuch near relations ſhould be ſo different to each other! There is, indeed, ſome reſemblance in their features, but in their manners, not the leaſt.

"Yes," anſwered Mrs. Beaumont, "and I believe he wiſhed to ſee you."

"My Lord drove ſo monſtrous faſt," ſaid Lady Louiſa, "that perhaps we paſſed him. He frighted me out of my ſenſes; I declare my head is quite giddy. Do you know, Ma'am, we have done nothing but quarrel all the morning?—You can't think how I've ſcolded;—have not I, my Lord?" and ſhe ſmiled expreſſively at Lord Merton.

"You have been, as you always are,"

ſaid

ſaid he, twiſting his whip with his fingers, "all ſweetneſs."

"O fie, my Lord," cried ſhe, "I know you don't think ſo; I know you think me very ill-natured;—don't you, my Lord?"

"No, upon my honour;—how can your Ladyſhip aſk ſuch a queſtion? Pray how goes time? my watch ſtands."

"It is almoſt three," anſwered Mrs. Beaumont.

"Lord, Ma'am, you frighten me!" cried Lady Louiſa; and then turning to Lord Merton, "why now, you wicked creature, you, did not you tell me it was but one?"

Mrs. Selwyn then roſe to take leave; but Mrs. Beaumont aſked if ſhe would look at the ſhrubbery. "I ſhould like it much," anſwered ſhe, "but that I fear to fatigue Miſs Anville."

Lady Louiſa then, raiſing her head from her hand, on which it had leant, turned round to look at me, and, having fully ſatisfied her curioſity, without any regard to the confuſion it gave me, turned about, and, again leaning on her hand, took no further notice of me.

I declared myſelf very able to walk, and begged that I might accompany them.

"What

"What say *you*, Lady Louisa," cried Mrs. Beaumont, "to a strole in the garden?"

"Me, Ma'am!—I declare I can't stir a step; the heat is so excessive, it would kill me. I'm half dead with it already; besides, I shall have no time to dress. Will any body be here to-day, Ma'am?"

"I believe not, unless Lord Merton will favour us with his company."

"With great pleasure, Madam."

"Well, I declare you don't deserve to be asked," cried Lady Louisa, "you wicked creature, you!—I *must* tell you one thing, Ma'am,—you can't think how abominable he was! do you know we met Mr. Lovel in his new phaeton, and my Lord was so cruel as to drive against it?—we really flew. I declare I could not breathe. Upon my word, my Lord, I'll never trust myself with you again,—I won't indeed!"

We then went into the garden, leaving them to discuss the point at their leisure.

Do you remember a *pretty but affected young lady* I mentioned to have seen, in Lord Orville's party, at the Pantheon? How little did I then imagine her to be his sister! yet Lady Louisa Larpent is the very person. I can now account for the piqued manner of her speaking to Lord

Merton

Merton that evening, and I can now account for the air of displeasure with which Lord Orville marked the undue attention of his future brother-in-law to me.

We had not walked long, ere, at a distance, I perceived Lord Orville, who seemed just dismounted from his horse, enter the garden. All my perturbation returned at the sight of him!—yet I endeavoured to repress every feeling but resentment. As he approached us, he bowed to the whole party; but I turned away my head, to avoid taking any share in his civility. Addressing himself immediately to Mrs. Beaumont, he was beginning to enquire after his sister, but upon seeing my face, he suddenly exclaimed "Miss Anville!—" and then he advanced, and made his compliments to me,—not with an air of vanity or impertinence, nor yet with a look of consciousness or shame,—but with a countenance open, manly, and charming!—with a smile that indicated pleasure, and eyes that sparkled with delight!—on *my* side was all the consciousness, for by him, I really believe, the letter was, at that moment, entirely forgotten.

With what politeness did he address me! with what sweetness did he look at me! the very tone of his voice seemed flattering! he congratulated himself upon his good

good fortune in meeting with me,—hoped I ſhould ſpend ſome time at Briſtol, and enquired, even with anxiety enquired, if my health was the cauſe of my journey, in which caſe his ſatisfaction would be converted into apprehenſion.

Yet, ſtruck as I was with his manner, and charmed to find him ſuch as he was wont to be, imagine not, my dear Sir, that I forgot the reſentment I owe him, or the cauſe he has given me of diſpleaſure; no, my behaviour was ſuch as, I hope, had you ſeen, you would not have diſapproved: I was grave and diſtant, I ſcarce looked at him when he ſpoke, or anſwered him when he was ſilent.

As he muſt certainly obſerve this alteration in my conduct, I think it could not fail making him both recollect and repent the provocation he had ſo cauſeleſsly given me: for ſurely he was not ſo wholly loſt to reaſon, as to be now ignorant he had ever offended me.

The moment that, without abſolute rudeneſs, I was able, I turned entirely from him, and aſked Mrs. Selwyn if we ſhould not be late home? How Lord Orville looked I know not, for I avoided meeting his eyes, but he did not ſpeak another word as we proceeded to the garden-gate. Indeed I believe my abruptneſs ſurpriſed him,

him, for he did not ſeem to expect I had ſo much ſpirit. And, to own the truth, convinced as I was of the propriety, nay, neceſſity of ſhewing my diſpleaſure, I yet almoſt hated myſelf for receiving his politeneſs ſo ungraciouſly.

When we were taking leave, my eyes accidentally meeting his, I could not but obſerve that his gravity equalled my own, for it had entirely taken place of the ſmiles and good-humour with which he had met me.

"I am afraid this young Lady," ſaid Mrs. Beaumont, "is too weak for another long walk till ſhe is again reſted."

"If the Ladies will truſt to my driving," ſaid Lord Orville, "and are not afraid of a phaeton, mine ſhall be ready in a moment."

"You are very good, my Lord," ſaid Mrs. Selwyn, "but my will is yet unſigned, and I don't chuſe to venture in a phaeton with a young man while that is the caſe."

"O," cried Mrs. Beaumont, "you need not be afraid of my Lord Orville, for he is remarkably careful."

"Well, Miſs Anville," anſwered ſhe, "what ſay you?"

"Indeed," cried I, "I had much rather walk.—" But then, looking at Lord Orville, I perceived in his face a ſurpriſe

ſo

ſo ſerious at my abrupt refuſal, that I could not forbear adding, "for I ſhould be ſorry to occaſion ſo much trouble."

Lord Orville brightening at theſe words, came forward, and preſſed his offer in a manner not to be denied;—ſo the phaeton was ordered! And indeed, my dear Sir,—I know not how it was,—but, from that moment, my coldneſs and reſerve inſenſibly wore away! You muſt not be angry,—it was my intention, nay, my endeavour, to ſupport them with firmneſs; but when I formed the plan, I thought only of the letter,—not of Lord Orville!—and how is it poſſible for reſentment to ſubſiſt without provocation? yet, believe me, my deareſt Sir, had he ſuſtained the part he began to act when he wrote the ever-to-be-regretted letter, your Evelina would not have forfeited her title to your eſteem, by contentedly ſubmitting to be treated with indignity.

We continued in the garden till the phaeton was ready. When we parted from Mrs. Beaumont, ſhe repeated her invitation to Mrs. Selwyn to accept an apartment in her houſe, but the reaſon I have already mentioned made it be again declined.

Lord Orville drove very ſlow, and ſo cautiouſly, that, notwithſtanding the height of the phaeton, fear would have been ridiculous.

culous. I ſupported no part in the converſation, but Mrs. Selwyn extremely well ſupplied the place of two. Lord Orville himſelf did not ſpeak much, but the excellent ſenſe and refined good-breeding which accompany every word he utters, give value and weight to whatever he ſays.

"I ſuppoſe, my Lord," ſaid Mrs. Selwyn, when we ſtopped at our lodgings, "you would have been extremely confuſed had we met any gentlemen who have the honour of knowing you."

"If I had," anſwered he, gallantly, "it would have been from mere compaſſion at their envy."

"No, my Lord," anſwered ſhe, "it would have been from mere ſhame, that, in an age ſo daring, you alone ſhould be ſuch a coward as to forbear to frighten women."

"O," cried he, laughing, "when a man is in a fright for himſelf, the ladies cannot but be in ſecurity; for you have not had half the apprehenſion for the ſafety of your perſons, that I have for that of my heart." He then alighted, handed us out, took leave, and again mounting the phaeton, was out of ſight in a minute.

"Certainly," ſaid Mrs. Selwyn, when he was gone, "there muſt have been ſome miſtake in the birth of that young man; he

he was, undoubtedly, deſigned for the laſt age; for he is really polite!"

And now, my dear Sir, do not you think, according to the preſent ſituation of affairs, I may give up my reſentment, without imprudence or impropriety? I hope you will not blame me. Indeed, had you, like me, ſeen his reſpectful behaviour, you would have been convinced of the impracticability of ſupporting any further indignation.

LETTER III.

Evelina in continuation.

Briſtol Hotwells, Sept. 19th.

YESTERDAY morning Mrs. Selwyn received a card from Mrs. Beaumont, to aſk her to dine with her to-day; and another, to the ſame purpoſe, came to me. The invitation was accepted, and we are but juſt arrived from Clifton-Hill.

We found Mrs. Beaumont alone in the parlour. I will write you the character of that lady, in the words of our ſatyrical friend Mrs. Selwyn. "She "is an abſolute *Court Calendar bigot*;

"for, chancing herself to be born of a noble
"and ancient family, she thinks proper to
"be of opinion, that *birth* and *virtue* are
"one and the same thing. She has some
"good qualities, but they rather originate
"from pride than principle, as she piques
"herself upon being too high born to be
"capable of an unworthy action, and thinks
"it incumbent upon her to support the dig-
"nity of her ancestry. Fortunately for the
"world in general, she has taken it into her
"head, that condescension is the most di-
"stinguishing virtue of high life; so that the
"same pride of family which renders others
"imperious, is with her the motive of affa-
"bility. But her civility is too formal to
"be comfortable, and too mechanical to be
"flattering. That she does *me* the honour
"of so much notice, is merely owing to an
"accident which, I am sure, is very painful
"to her remembrance; for it so happened
"that I once did her some service, in regard
"to an apartment, at Southampton; and I
"have since been informed, that, at the time
"she accepted my assistance, she thought I
"was a woman of quality: and I make no
"doubt but she was miserable when she
"discovered me to be a mere country gen-
"tlewoman: however, her nice notions of
"decorum have made her load me with
"favours ever since. But I am not much

"flattered by her civilities, as I am convinced I owe them neither to attachment "nor gratitude, but solely to a desire of cancelling an obligation which she cannot "brook being under, to one whose name "is no where to be found in the Court "Calendar."

You well know, my dear Sir, the delight this lady takes in giving way to her satirical humour.

Mrs. Beaumont received us very graciously, though she somewhat distressed me by the questions she asked concerning my family, —such as, Whether I was related to the Anvilles in the North?—Whether some of my name did not live in Lincolnshire? and many other enquiries, which much embarrassed me.

The conversation, next, turned upon the intended marriage in her family. She treated the subject with reserve, but it was evident she disapproved Lady Louisa's choice. She spoke in terms of the highest esteem of Lord Orville, calling him, in Marmontel's words, *Un jeune homme comme il y en a peu.*

I did not think this conversation very agreeably interrupted by the entrance of Mr. Lovel. Indeed I am heartily sorry he is now at the Hot-wells. He made his compliments with the most obsequious respect to Mrs. Beaumont, but took no sort of notice of any other person.

In

In a few minutes Lady Louiſa Larpent made her appearance. The ſame manners prevailed; for courtſying, with, "I hope you are well, Ma'am," to Mrs. Beaumont, ſhe paſſed ſtraight forward to her ſeat on the ſofa, where, leaning her head on her hand, ſhe caſt her languiſhing eyes round the room, with a vacant ſtare, as if determined, though ſhe looked, not to ſee who was in it.

Mr. Lovel, preſently approaching her, with reverence the moſt profound, hoped her Ladyſhip was not indiſpoſed.

"Mr. Lovel!" cried ſhe, raiſing her head, "I declare I did not ſee you: Have you been here long?"

"By my *watch*, Madam," ſaid he, "only five minutes,—but by your Ladyſhip's abſence, as many hours."

"O! now I think of it," cried ſhe, "I am very angry with you,—ſo go along, do, for I ſha'n't ſpeak to you all day."

"Heaven forbid your La'ſhip's diſpleaſure ſhould laſt ſo long! in ſuch cruel circumſtances, a day would ſeem an age. But in what have I been ſo unfortunate as to offend?"

"O, you half killed me, the other morning, with terror! I have not yet recovered from my fright. How could you be ſo cruel as to drive your phaeton againſt my Lord Merton's?"

"'Pon honour, Ma'am, your La'ſhip does me wrong; it was all owing to the horſes,—there was no curbing them. I proteſt I ſuffered more than your Ladyſhip, from the terror of alarming you."

Juſt then entered Lord Merton; ſtalking up to Mrs. Beaumont, to whom alone he bowed, he hoped he had not made her wait; and then advancing to Lady Louiſa, ſaid, in a careleſs manner, "How is your Ladyſhip this morning?"

"Not well at all," anſwered ſhe; "I have been dying with the head-ach ever ſince I got up."

"Indeed!" cried he, with a countenance wholly unmoved, "I am very unhappy to hear it. But ſhould not your Ladyſhip have ſome advice?"

"I am quite ſick of advice," anſwered ſhe; "Mr. Ridgeway has but juſt left me,—but he has done me no good. Nobody here knows what is the matter with me, yet they all ſee how indifferent I am."

"Your Ladyſhip's conſtitution," ſaid Mr. Lovel, "is infinitely delicate."

"Indeed it is," cried ſhe, in a low voice, "I am *nerve* all over!"

"I am glad, however," ſaid Lord Merton, "that you did not take the air this morning, for Coverley has been driving againſt me as if he was mad: he has got

got two of the fineſt ſpirited horſes I ever ſaw."

"Pray, my Lord," cried ſhe, "why did not you bring Mr. Coverley with you? he's a droll creature; I like him monſtrouſly."

"Why, he promiſed to be here as ſoon as me. I ſuppoſe he'll come before dinner's over."

In the midſt of this trifling converſation, Lord Orville made his appearance. O how different was his addreſs! how ſuperior did he look and move, to all about him! Having paid his reſpects to Mrs. Beaumont, and then to Mrs. Selwyn, he came up to me, and ſaid, "I hope Miſs Anville has not ſuffered from the fatigue of Monday morning!" Then, turning to Lady Louiſa, who ſeemed rather ſurpriſed at his ſpeaking to me, he added, "Give me leave, Siſter, to introduce Miſs Anville to you."

Lady Louiſa, half-riſing, ſaid, very coldly, that ſhe ſhould be glad of the honour of knowing me; and then, abruptly turning to Lord Merton and Mr. Lovel, continued, in a half-whiſper, her converſation.

For my part, I had riſen and courtſied, and now, feeling very fooliſh, I ſeated myſelf again; firſt I bluſhed at the unexpected politeneſs of Lord Orville, and immediately afterwards, at the contemptuous failure of it in his ſiſter. How can that young lady

see her brother so universally admired for his manners and deportment, and yet be so unamiably opposite to him in her's! But while *his* mind, enlarged and noble, rises superior to the little prejudices of rank, *her's*, feeble and unsteady, sinks beneath their influence.

Lord Orville, I am sure, was hurt and displeased: he bit his lips, and turning from her, addressed himself wholly to me, till we were summoned to dinner. Do you think I was not grateful for his attention? yes, indeed, and every angry idea I had entertained, was totally obliterated.

As we were seating ourselves at the table, Mr. Coverley came into the room: he made a thousand apologies in a breath for being so late, but said he had been retarded by a little accident, for that he had overturned his phaeton, and broke it all to pieces. Lady Louisa screamed at this intelligence, and looking at Lord Merton, declared she would never go into a phaeton again.

"O," cried he, "never mind Jack Coverley, for he does not know how to drive."

"My Lord," cried Mr. Coverley, "I'll drive against *you* for a thousand pounds."

"Done!" returned the other; "Name your day, and we'll each chuse a judge."

"The

"The sooner the better," cried Mr. Coverley; "to-morrow, if the carriage can be repaired."

"These enterprises," said Mrs. Selwyn, "are very proper for men of rank, since 'tis a million to one but both parties will be incapacitated for any better employment."

"For Heaven's sake," cried Lady Louisa, changing colour, "don't talk so shockingly! Pray, my Lord, pray, Mr. Coverley, don't alarm me in this manner."

"Compose yourself, Lady Louisa," said Mrs. Beaumont, "the gentlemen will think better of the scheme; they are neither of them in earnest."

"The very mention of such a scheme," said Lady Louisa, taking out her salts, "makes me tremble all over! Indeed, my Lord, you have frightened me to death! I sha'n't eat a morsel of dinner."

"Permit me," said Lord Orville, "to propose some other subject for the present, and we will discuss this matter another time."

"Pray, Brother, excuse me; my Lord must give me his word to drop this project,—for, I declare, it has made me sick as death."

"To compromise the matter," said Lord Orville, "suppose, if both parties are un-

willing to give up the bet, that, to make the ladies easy, we change its object to something less dangerous?"

This proposal was so strongly seconded by all the party, that both Lord Merton and Mr. Coverley were obliged to comply with it: and it was then agreed that the affair should be finally settled in the afternoon.

"I shall now be entirely out of conceit with phaetons again," said Mrs. Selwyn, "though Lord Orville had almost reconciled me to them."

"My Lord Orville!" cried the witty Mr. Coverley, "why, my Lord Orville is as careful,—egad, as careful as an old woman! Why, I'd drive a one-horse cart against my Lord's phaeton for a hundred guineas!"

This sally occasioned much laughter; for Mr. Coverley, I find, is regarded as a man of infinite humour.

"Perhaps, Sir," said Mrs. Selwyn, "you have not discovered the *reason* my Lord Orville is so careful?"

"Why, no, Ma'am; I must own, I never heard any particular reason for it."

"Why then, Sir, I'll tell it you; and I believe you will confess it to be *very* particular; his Lordship's friends are not yet tired of him."

Lord

Lord Orville laughed and bowed. Mr. Coverley, a little confuſed, turned to Lord Merton, and ſaid, "No foul play, my Lord! I remember your Lordſhip recommended me to the notice of this lady the other morning, and, egad, I believe you have been doing me the ſame office to-day."

"Give you joy, Jack!" cried Lord Merton, with a loud laugh.

After this, the converſation turned wholly upon eating, a ſubject which was diſcuſſed with the utmoſt delight; and, had I not known they were men of rank and faſhion, I ſhould have imagined that Lord Merton, Mr. Lovel, and Mr. Coverley, had all been profeſſed cooks; for they diſplayed ſo much knowledge of ſauces and made diſhes, and of the various methods of dreſſing the ſame things, that I am perſuaded they muſt have given much time, and much ſtudy, to make themſelves ſuch adepts in this *art*. It would be very difficult to determine, whether they were moſt to be diſtinguiſhed as *gluttons*, or *epicures*; for they were, at once, dainty and voracious, underſtood the right and the wrong of every diſh, and alike emptied the one and the other. I ſhould have been quite ſick of their remarks, had I not been entertained by ſeeing that Lord Orville, who, I am

ſure, was equally diſguſted, not only read my ſentiments, but, by his countenance, communicated to me his own.

When dinner was over, Mrs. Beaumont recommended the gentlemen to the care of Lord Orville, and then attended the ladies to the drawing-room.

The converſation, till tea-time, was extremely inſipid; Mrs. Selwyn reſerved herſelf for the gentlemen, Mrs. Beaumont was grave, and Lady Louiſa languid.

But, at tea, every body revived; we were joined by the gentlemen, and gaiety took place of dullneſs.

Since I, as Mr. Lovel ſays, am *Nobody* *, I ſeated myſelf quietly at a window, and not very near to any body: Lord Merton, Mr. Coverley, and Mr. Lovel, ſeverally paſſed me without notice, and ſurrounded the chair of Lady Louiſa Larpent. I muſt own, I was rather piqued at the behaviour of Mr. Lovel, as he had formerly known me. It is true, I moſt ſincerely deſpiſe his foppery, yet I ſhould be grieved to meet with *contempt* from any body. But I was by no means ſorry to find, that Lord Merton was determined not to know me before Lady Louiſa, as his neglect relieved me from much embarraſſ-

* Vol. I. p. 48.

ment.

ment. As to Mr. Coverley, his attention or diſregard were equally indifferent to me. Yet, altogether, I felt extremely uncomfortable in finding myſelf conſidered in a light very inferior to the reſt of the company.

But, when Lord Orville appeared, the ſcene changed: he came up ſtairs laſt, and ſeeing me ſit alone, not only ſpoke to me directly, but drew a chair next mine, and honoured me with his entire attention.

He enquired very particularly after my health, and hoped I had already found benefit from the Briſtol air. "How little did I imagine," added he, "when I had laſt the pleaſure of ſeeing you in town, that ill health would, in ſo ſhort a time, have brought you hither! I am aſhamed of myſelf for the ſatisfaction I feel at ſeeing you,—yet, how can I help it!"

He then enquired after the Mirvan family, and ſpoke of Mrs. Mirvan in terms of moſt juſt praiſe. "She is gentle and amiable," ſaid he, "a true feminine character."

"Yes, indeed," anſwered I, "and her ſweet daughter, to ſay every thing of her at once, is juſt the daughter ſuch a mother deſerves."

"I am glad of it," ſaid he, "for both their ſakes, as ſuch near relations muſt al-

ways reflect credit or disgrace on each other."

After this, he began to speak of the beauties of Clifton; but, in a few moments, he was interrupted by a call from the company to discuss the affair of the wager. Lord Merton and Mr. Coverley, though they had been discoursing upon the subject some time, could not fix upon the thing that satisfied them both.

When they asked the assistance of Lord Orville, he proposed that every body present should vote something, and that the two gentlemen should draw lots which, from the several votes, should decide the bet.

"We must then begin with the ladies," said Lord Orville; and applied to Mrs. Selwyn.

"With all my heart," answered she, with her usual readiness; "and, since the gentlemen are not allowed to risk their *necks*, suppose we decide the bet by their *heads?*"

"By our heads?" cried Mr. Coverley; "Egad, I don't understand you."

"I will then explain myself more fully. As I doubt not but you are both excellent classics, suppose, for the good of your own memories, and the entertainment and surprise of the company, the thousand pounds

should

ſhould fall to the ſhare of him who can repeat by heart the longeſt ode of Horace?"

Nobody could help laughing, the two gentlemen applied to excepted; who ſeemed, each of them, rather at a loſs in what manner to receive this unexpected propoſal. At length Mr. Coverley, bowing low, ſaid, "Will your Lordſhip pleaſe to begin?"

"Devil take me if I do!" anſwered he, turning on his heel, and ſtalking to the window.

"Come, Gentlemen," ſaid Mrs. Selwyn, "why do you heſitate? I am ſure you cannot be afraid of a weak *woman?* beſides, if you ſhould chance to be out, Mr. Lovel, I dare ſay, will have the goodneſs to aſſiſt you."

The laugh, now, turned againſt Mr. Lovel, whoſe change of countenance manifeſted no great pleaſure at the tranſition.

"Me, Madam!" ſaid he, colouring, "no, really I muſt beg to be excuſed."

"Why ſo, Sir?"

"Why ſo, Ma'am? — Why, really,— as to that,—'pon honour, Ma'am, you are rather—a little ſevere;—for how is it poſſible for a man who is in the Houſe, to ſtudy the claſſics? I aſſure you, Ma'am," (with an affected ſhrug) "I find quite buſineſs enough for *my* poor head, in ſtudying politics."

"But,

"But, did you ſtudy politics at ſchool, and at the univerſity?"

"At the univerſity!" repeated he with an embarraſſed look; "why, as to that, Ma'am,—no, I can't ſay I did; but then, what with riding,—and—and—and ſo forth, —really one has not much time, even at the univerſity, for mere reading."

"But, to be ſure, Sir, you *have* read the claſſics?"

"O dear, yes, Ma'am!—very often,—but not very—not very lately."

"Which of the odes do you recommend to theſe gentlemen to begin with?"

"Which of the odes!—Really, Ma'am, as to that, I have no very particular choice,—for, to own the truth, that Horace was never a very great favourite with me."

"In truth I believe you!" ſaid Mrs. Selwyn, very drily.

Lord Merton, again advancing into the circle, with a nod and a laugh, ſaid, "Give you joy, Lovel!"

Lord Orville next applied to Mrs. Beaumont for her vote.

"It would very agreeably remind me of paſt times," ſaid ſhe, "when *bowing* was in faſhion, if the bet was to depend upon the beſt-made bow."

"Egad, my Lord!" cried Mr. Coverley,

ley, "there I ſhould beat you hollow, for your Lordſhip never bows at all."

"And, pray Sir, do *you?*" ſaid Mrs. Selwyn.

"Do *I*, Ma'am?" cried he, "Why, only ſee!"

"I proteſt," cried ſhe, "I ſhould have taken *that* for a *ſhrug*, if you had not told me 'twas a bow."

"My Lord," cried Mr. Coverley, "let's practiſe;" and then, moſt ridiculouſly, they pranced about the room, making bows.

"We muſt now," ſaid Lord Orville, turning to me, "call upon Miſs Anville."

"O no, my Lord," cried I, "indeed I have nothing to propoſe." He would not, however, be refuſed, but urged me ſo much to ſay *ſomething*, that at laſt, not to make him wait any longer, I ventured to propoſe an extempore couplet upon ſome given ſubject.

Mr. Coverley inſtantly made me a bow, or, according to Mrs. Selwyn, a *ſhrug*, crying, "Thank you, Ma'am; egad, that's my *fort!*—Why, my Lord, the Fates ſeem againſt you."

Lady Louiſa was then applied to; and every body ſeemed eager to hear her opinion. "I don't know what to ſay, I de-

"clare,"

clare," cried she, affectedly; "can't you pass me?"

"By no means!" said Lord Merton.

"Is it possible your Ladyship can make so cruel a request?" said Mr. Lovel.

"Egad," cried Mr. Coverley, "if your Ladyship does not help us in this dilemma, we shall be forced to return to our phaetons."

"Oh," cried Lady Louisa, screaming, "you frightful creature, you, how can you be so abominable?"

I believe this trifling lasted near half an hour; when, at length, every body being tired, it was given up, and she said she would consider against another time.

Lord Orville now called upon Mr. Lovel, who, after about ten minutes deliberation, proposed, with a most important face, to determine the wager by who should draw the longest straw!

I had much difficulty to forbear laughing at this unmeaning scheme; but saw, to my great surprise, not the least change of countenance in any other person: and, since we came home, Mrs. Selwyn has informed me, that to *draw straws* is a fashion of betting by no means uncommon! Good God! my dear Sir, does it not seem as if money were of no value or service, since those who

who poſſeſs, ſquander it away in a manner ſo infinitely abſurd!

It now only remained for Lord Orville to ſpeak; and the attention of the company ſhewed the expectations he had raiſed; yet, I believe, they by no means prevented his propoſal from being heard with amazement; for it was no other, than that the money ſhould be his due, who, according to the opinion of two judges, ſhould bring the worthieſt object with whom to ſhare it!

They all ſtared, without ſpeaking. Indeed, I believe every one, for a moment at leaſt, experienced ſomething like ſhame, from having either propoſed or countenanced an extravagance ſo uſeleſs and frivolous. For my part, I was ſo much ſtruck and affected by a rebuke ſo noble to theſe ſpendthrifts, that I felt my eyes filled with tears.

The ſhort ſilence, and momentary reflection into which the company was ſurpriſed, Mr. Coverley was the firſt to diſpel, by ſaying, "Egad, my Lord, your Lordſhip has a moſt remarkable odd way of taking things."

"Faith," ſaid the incorrigible Lord Merton, "if this ſcheme takes, I ſhall fix upon my Swiſs to ſhare with me; for I don't know a worthier fellow breathing."

After

After a few more of these attempts at wit, the two gentlemen agreed that they would settle the affair the next morning.

The conversation then took a different turn, but I did not give it sufficient attention to write any account of it. Not long after, Lord Orville resuming his seat near mine, said, "Why is Miss Anville so thoughtful?"

"I am sorry, my Lord," said I, "to consider myself among those who have so justly incurred your censure."

"My censure!—you amaze me!"

"Indeed, my Lord, you have made me quite ashamed of myself, for having given my vote so foolishly, when an opportunity offered, if, like your Lordship, I had had the sense to use it, of shewing some humanity."

"You treat this too seriously," said he, smiling; "and I hardly know if you do not now mean a rebuke to *me*."

"To you, my Lord!"

"Nay, who are most deserving of it, those who adapt the conversation to the company, or, those who affect to be superior to it?"

"O, my Lord, who else would do you so little justice?"

"I flatter myself," answered he, "that, in fact, your opinion and mine, in this point,

point, are the ſame, though you condeſcended to comply with the humour of the company. It is for me, therefore, to apologize for ſo unſeaſonable a gravity, which, but for the particular intereſt that I now take in the affairs of Lord Merton, I ſhould not have been ſo officious to diſplay."

Such a compliment as this could not fail to reconcile me to myſelf; and with revived ſpirits, I entered into a converſation, which he ſupported with me till Mrs. Selwyn's carriage was announced, and we returned home.

During our ride, Mrs. Selwyn very much ſurpriſed me, by aſking if I thought my health would now permit me to give up my morning walks to the pump-room, for the purpoſe of ſpending a week at Clifton? "for this poor Mrs. Beaumont," added ſhe, "is ſo eager to have a diſcharge in full of her debt to me, that, out of mere compaſſion, I am induced to liſten to her. Beſides, ſhe has always a houſe full of people, and though they are chiefly fools and coxcombs, yet there is ſome pleaſure in cutting them up."

I begged I might not, by any means, prevent her following her inclination, as my health was now very well eſtabliſhed. And ſo, my dear Sir, to-morrow we are

to

to be, actually, the guests of Mrs. Beaumont.

I am not much delighted at this scheme; for, greatly as I am flattered by the attention of Lord Orville, it is not very comfortable to be neglected by every body else. Besides, as I am sure I owe the particularity of his civility to a generous feeling for my situation, I cannot expect him to support it so long as a week.

How often do I wish, since I am absent from you, that I was under the protection of Mrs. Mirvan! It is true, Mrs. Selwyn is very obliging, and, in every respect, treats me as an equal; but she is contented with behaving well herself, and does not, with a distinguishing politeness, raise and support me with others. Yet I mean not to blame her, for I know she is sincerely my friend; but the fact is, she is herself so much occupied in conversation, when in company, that she has neither leisure nor thought to attend to the silent.

Well, I must take my chance! But I knew not, till now, how requisite are birth and fortune to the attainment of respect and civility.

LETTER IV.

Evelina in continuation.

Clifton, Sept. 20th.

HERE I am, my dear Sir, under the same roof, and inmate of the same house, as Lord Orville! Indeed, if this were not the case, my situation would be very disagreeable, as you will easily believe, when I tell you the light in which I am generally considered.

"My dear," said Mrs. Selwyn, "did you ever before meet with that egregious fop, Lovel?"

I very readily satisfied her as to my acquaintance with him.

"O then," said she, "I am the less surprised at his ill-nature, since he has already injured you."

I begged her to explain herself; and then she told me, that while Lord Orville was speaking to me, Lady Louisa said to Mr. Lovel, "do you know who that is?"

"Why, Ma'am, no, 'pon honour," answered he, "I can't absolutely say I do; I only know she is a kind of a toad-eater. She made her first appearance in that capacity

city last Spring, when she attended Miss Mirvan, a young lady of Kent."

How cruel is it, my dear Sir, to be thus exposed to the impertinent suggestions of a man who is determined to do me ill offices! Lady Louisa may well despise a *toad-eater*; but, thank Heaven, her brother has not heard, or does not credit, the mortifying appellation. Mrs. Selwyn said, she would advise me to *pay my court* to this Mr. Lovel; "for," said she, "though he is malicious, he is fashionable, and may do you some harm in the great world." But I should disdain myself as much as I do him, were I capable of such duplicity as to flatter a man who I scorn and despise.

We were received by Mrs. Beaumont with great civility, and by Lord Orville with something more. As to Lady Louisa, she scarcely perceived that we were in the room.

There has been company here all day; part of which I have spent most happily; for after tea, when the ladies played at cards, Lord Orville, who does not, and I, who cannot play, were consequently at our own disposal; and then his Lordship entered into a conversation with me, which lasted till supper-time.

Almost insensibly, I find the constraint, the reserve, I have been wont to feel in his

his presence, wear away; the politeness, the sweetness, with which he speaks to me, restore all my natural chearfulness, and make me almost as easy as he is himself; and the more so, as, if I may judge by his looks, I am rather raised, than sunk, of late in his opinion.

I asked him, how the bet was, at last, to be decided? He told me, that, to his great satisfaction, the parties had been prevailed upon to lower the sum from one thousand to one hundred pounds; and that they had agreed it should be determined, by a race between two old women, one of which was to be chosen by each side, and both were to be proved more than eighty years of age, though, in other respects, strong and healthy as possible.

When I expressed my surprise at this extraordinary method of spending so much money, "I am charmed," said he, "at the novelty of meeting with one so unhackneyed in the world, as not to be yet influenced by custom to forget the use of reason: for certain it is, that the prevalence of fashion makes the greatest absurdities pass uncensured, and the mind naturally accommodates itself, even to the most ridiculous improprieties, if they occur frequently."

"I should have hoped," said I, "that the humane proposal made yesterday by your

your Lordſhip, would have had more effect."

"O," cried he, laughing, "I was ſo far from expecting any ſucceſs, that I ſhall think myſelf very fortunate if I eſcape the wit of Mr. Coverley in a lampoon! yet I ſpoke openly, becauſe I do not wiſh to conceal that I am no friend to gaming."

After this, he took up the New Bath Guide, and read it with me till ſupper-time. In our way down ſtairs, Lady Louiſa ſaid, "I thought, Brother, you were engaged this evening?"

"Yes, Siſter," anſwered he, "and I *have* been engaged." And he bowed to me with an air of gallantry that rather confuſed me.

September 23d.

Almoſt inſenſibly have three days glided on ſince I wrote laſt, and ſo ſerenely, that, but for your abſence, I could not have formed a wiſh. My reſidence here is much happier than I had dared expect. The attention with which Lord Orville honours me is as uniform as it is flattering, and ſeems to reſult from a benevolence of heart that proves him as much a ſtranger to caprice as to pride; for, as his particular civilities aroſe from a generous reſentment at ſeeing me neglected, ſo will they, I truſt

truſt, continue, as long as I ſhall, in any degree, deſerve them. I am now not merely eaſy, but even gay in his preſence: ſuch is the effect of true politeneſs, that it baniſhes all reſtraint and embarraſſment. When we walk out, he condeſcends to be my companion, and keeps by my ſide all the way we go. When we read, he marks the paſſages moſt worthy to be noticed, draws out my ſentiments, and favours me with his own. At table, where he always ſits next to me, he obliges me by a thouſand nameleſs attentions, while the diſtinguiſhing good-breeding with which he treats me, prevents my repining at the viſibly-felt ſuperiority of the reſt of the company. A thouſand occaſional meetings could not have brought us to that degree of ſocial freedom, which four days ſpent under the ſame roof have, inſenſibly, been productive of: and, as my only friend in this houſe, Mrs. Selwyn, is too much engroſſed in perpetual converſation to attend much to me, Lord Orville ſeems to regard me as a helpleſs ſtranger, and, as ſuch, to think me entitled to his good offices and protection. Indeed, my dear Sir, I have reaſon to hope, that the depreciating opinion he formerly entertained of me is ſucceeded by one infinitely more partial.—It may be that I flatter myſelf, but yet his looks, his atten-

tions, his desire of drawing me into conversation, and his solicitude to oblige me, all conspire to make me hope I do not. In short, my dearest Sir, these last four happy days would repay me for months of sorrow and pain!

LETTER V.

Evelina in continuation.

Clifton, Sept. 24th.

THIS morning I came down stairs very early, and supposing that the family would not assemble for some time, I strolled out, purposing to take a long walk, in the manner I was wont to do at Berry Hill, before breakfast. But I had scarce shut the garden-gate, before I was met by a gentleman, who, immediately bowing to me, I recollected to be the unhappy Mr. Macartney. Very much surprised, I courtsied, and stopped till he came up to me. He was still in mourning, but looked better than when I saw him last, though he had the same air of melancholy which so much struck me at first sight of him.

Addressing me with the utmost respect, "I am happy, Madam," said he, "to have

have met with you so soon. I came to Bristol but yesterday, and have had no small difficulty in tracing you to Clifton.

"Did you know, then, of my being here?"

"I did, Madam; the sole motive of my journey was to see you. I have been to Berry Hill, and there I had my intelligence, and, at the same time, the unwelcome information of your ill health.

"Good God! Sir,—and can you possibly have taken so much trouble?"

"Trouble! Oh, Madam, could there be any, to return you, the moment I had the power, my personal acknowledgments for your goodness"

I then enquired after Madame Duval, and the Snow-Hill family. He told me, they were all well, and that Madame Duval proposed soon returning to Paris. When I congratulated him upon looking better, "It is *yourself*, Madam," said he, "you should congratulate, for to your humanity alone it may now be owing that I exist at all." He then told me, that his affairs were now in a less desperate situation, and that he hoped, by the assistance of time and reason, to accommodate his mind to a more chearful submission to his fate. "The interest you so generously took in my affliction," added he, "assures

me you will not be displeased to hear of my better fortune; I was therefore eager to acquaint you with it." He then told me, that his friend, the moment he had received his letter, quitted Paris, and flew to give him his personal assistance and consolation. With a heavy heart he acknowledged, he accepted it; "but yet," he added, "I *have* accepted it, and therefore, as bound equally by duty and honour, my first step was to hasten to the benefactress of my distress, and to return," (presenting me something in a paper) "the only part of my obligations that *can* be returned; for the rest, I have nothing but my gratitude to offer, and must always be contented to consider myself her debtor."

I congratulated him most sincerely upon his dawning prosperity, but begged he would not deprive me of the pleasure of being his friend, and declined receiving the money, till his affairs were more settled.

While this point was in agitation, I heard Lord Orville's voice enquiring of the gardener if he had seen me? I immediately opened the garden-gate, and his Lordship, advancing to me with quickness, said, "Good God, Miss Anville, have you been out, alone? Breakfast has been ready some time, and I have been round the garden in search of you."

"Your

"Your Lordſhip has been very good," ſaid I; "but I hope you have not waited."

"Not waited!" repeated he, ſmiling, "Do you think we could ſit down quietly to breakfaſt, with the idea that you had run away from us? But come," (offering to hand me) "if we do not return, they will ſuppoſe *I* am run away too; and they very naturally may, as they know the attraction of the magnet that draws me."

"I will come, my Lord," ſaid I, rather embarraſſed, "in two minutes." Then, turning to Mr. Macartney, with yet more embarraſſment, I wiſhed him good morning.

He advanced towards the garden, with the paper ſtill in his hand.

"No, no," cried I, "ſome other time."

"May I then, Madam, have the honour of ſeeing you again?"

I did not dare take the liberty of inviting any body to the houſe of Mrs. Beaumont, nor yet had I the preſence of mind to make an excuſe; and therefore, not knowing how to refuſe him, I ſaid, "Perhaps you may be this way again to-morrow morning,—and I believe I ſhall walk out before breakfaſt."

He bowed, and went away; while I,

turning again to Lord Orville, saw his countenance so much altered, that I was frightened at what I had so hastily said. He did not again offer me his hand, but walked, silent and slow, by my side. Good Heaven! thought I, what may he not suppose from this adventure? May he not, by my desire of meeting Mr. Macartney to-morrow, imagine it was by design I walked out to meet him to-day? Tormented by this apprehension, I determined to avail myself of the freedom which his behaviour since I came hither has encouraged; and, since he would not ask any questions, begin an explanation myself. I therefore slackened my pace, to gain time, and then said, "Was not your Lordship surprised to see me speaking with a stranger?"

"A stranger!" repeated he; "is it possible that gentleman can be a stranger to you?"

"No, my Lord,"—said I, stammering, "not to *me*,—but only it might look—he might seem—"

"No, believe me," said he, with a forced smile, "I could never suppose Miss Anville would make an appointment with a stranger."

"An appointment, my Lord!" repeated I, colouring violently.

"Pardon

"Pardon me, Madam," answered he, "but I thought I had heard one."

I was so much confounded, that I could not speak; yet, finding he walked quietly on, I could not endure he should make his own interpretation of my silence; and therefore, as soon as I recovered from my surprise, I said, "Indeed, my Lord, you are much mistaken,—Mr. Macartney had particular business with me—and I could not,—I knew not how to refuse seeing him,—but indeed, my Lord—I had not,—he had not,"—I stammered so terribly that I could not go on.

"I am very sorry," said he, gravely, "that I have been so unfortunate as to distress you; but I should not have followed you, had I not imagined you were merely walked out for the air."

"And so I was!" cried I eagerly, "indeed, my Lord, I was! My meeting with Mr. Macartney was quite accidental; and if your Lordship thinks there is any impropriety in my seeing him to-morrow, I am ready to give up that intention.

"If *I* think!" said he, in a tone of surprise; "surely Miss Anville must best judge for herself! surely she cannot leave the arbitration of a point so delicate, to one who is ignorant of all the circumstances which attend it?"

"If," said I, "it was worth your Lordship's time to hear them,—you should *not* be ignorant of the circumstances which attend it."

"The sweetness of Miss Anville's disposition," said he, in a softened voice, "I have long admired, and the offer of a communication which does me so much honour, is too grateful to me not to be eagerly caught at."

Just then, Mrs. Selwyn opened the parlour window, and our conversation ended. I was rallied upon my passion for solitary walking, but no questions were asked me.

When breakfast was over, I hoped to have had some opportunity of speaking with Lord Orville; but Lord Merton and Mr. Coverley came in, and insisted upon his opinion of the spot they had fixed upon for the old women's race. The ladies declared they would be of the party, and, accordingly, we all went.

The race is to be run in Mrs. Beaumont's garden; the two gentlemen are as anxious as if their joint lives depended upon it. They have, at length, fixed upon objects, but have found great difficulty in persuading them to practise running, in order to try their strength. This grand affair is to be decided next Thursday.

When

When we returned to the house, the entrance of more company still prevented my having any conversation with Lord Orville. I was very much chagrined, as I knew he was engaged at the Hotwells in the afternoon. Seeing, therefore, no probability of speaking to him before the time of my meeting Mr. Macartney arrived, I determined that, rather than risk his ill opinion, I would leave Mr. Macartney to his own suggestions.

Yet, when I reflected upon his peculiar situation, his poverty, his sadness, and, more than all the rest, the idea I knew he entertained of what he calls his obligations to me, I could not resolve upon a breach of promise, which might be attributed to causes of all others the most offensive to one whom misfortune has made extremely suspicious of slights and contempt.

After the most uneasy consideration, I at length determined upon writing an excuse, which would, at once, save me from either meeting or affronting him. I therefore begged Mrs. Selwyn's leave to send her man to the Hotwells, which she instantly granted; and then I wrote the following note.

To Mr. Macartney.

Sir,

AS it will not be in my power to walk out to-morrow morning, I would by no means give you the trouble of coming to Clifton. I hope, however, to have the pleasure of seeing you before you quit Briſtol. I am,

Sir,
Your obedient ſervant,
EVELINA ANVILLE.

I deſired the ſervant to enquire at the Pump-room where Mr. Macartney lived, and returned to the parlour.

As ſoon as the company diſperſed, the ladies retired to dreſs. I then, unexpectedly, found myſelf alone with Lord Orville; who, the moment I roſe to follow Mrs. Selwyn, advanced to me, and ſaid, "Will Miſs Anville pardon my impatience, if I remind her of the promiſe ſhe was ſo good as to make me this morning?"

I ſtopped, and would have returned to my ſeat, but, before I had time, the ſervants came to lay the cloth. He retreated, and went towards the window; and while I was conſidering in what manner to begin, I could not help aſking myſelf what *right* I had

had to communicate the affairs of Mr. Macartney; and I doubted whether, to clear myself from one act of imprudence, I had not committed another.

Distressed by this reflection, I thought it best to quit the room, and give myself some time for consideration before I spoke; and therefore, only saying I must hasten to dress, I ran up stairs: rather abruptly, I own, and so, I fear, Lord Orville must think; yet what could I do? unused to the situations in which I find myself, and embarrassed by the slightest difficulties, I seldom, till too late, discover how I ought to act.

Just as we were all assembled to dinner, Mrs. Selwyn's man, coming into the parlour, presented to me a letter, and said, "I can't find out Mr. Macartney, Madam; but the post-office people will let you know if they hear of him."

I was extremely ashamed of this public message; and, meeting the eyes of Lord Orville, which were earnestly fixed on me, my confusion redoubled, and I knew not which way to look. All dinner-time, he was as silent as myself, and the moment it was in my power, I left the table, and went to my own room. Mrs. Selwyn presently followed me, and her questions obliged me to own almost all the particulars of my ac-

quaintance with Mr. Macartney, in order to excuſe my writing to him. She ſaid it was a moſt romantic affair, and ſpoke her ſentiments with great ſeverity, declaring that ſhe had no doubt but he was an adventurer and an impoſtor.

And now, my dear Sir, I am totally at a loſs what I ought to do: the more I reflect, the more ſenſible I am of the utter impropriety, nay, treachery, of revealing the ſtory, and publiſhing the misfortunes and poverty of Mr. Macartney? who has an undoubted right to my ſecrecy and diſcretion, and whoſe letter charges me to regard his communication as ſacred.—And yet, the appearance of myſtery,—perhaps ſomething worſe, which this affair muſt have to Lord Orville,—his ſerioufneſs,—and the promiſe I have made him, are inducements ſcarce to be reſiſted for truſting him, with the openneſs he has reaſon to expect from me.

I am equally diſtreſſed, too, whether or not I ſhould ſee Mr. Macartney to-morrow morning.

Oh, Sir, could I now be enlightened by your counſel, from what anxiety and perplexity ſhould I be relieved!

But no,—I ought not to betray Mr. Macartney, and I will not forfeit a confidence which would never have been repoſed

in me, but from a reliance upon my honour which I ſhould bluſh to find myſelf unworthy of. Deſirous as I am of the good opinion of Lord Orville, I will endeavour to act as if I was guided by your advice, and, making it my ſole aim to *deſerve* it, leave to time and to fate my ſucceſs or diſappointment.

Since I have formed this reſolution, my mind is more at eaſe; but I will not finiſh my letter till the affair is decided.

Sept. 25th.

I roſe very early this morning, and, after a thouſand different plans, not being able to reſolve upon giving poor Mr. Macartney leave to ſuppoſe I neglected him, I thought it incumbent upon me to keep my word, ſince he had not received my letter; I therefore determined to make my own apologies, not to ſtay with him two minutes, and to excuſe myſelf from meeting him any more.

Yet, uncertain whether I was wrong or right, it was with fear and trembling that I opened the garden-gate,—judge, then, of my feelings, when the firſt object I ſaw was Lord Orville!—he, too, looked extremely diſconcerted, and ſaid, in a heſitating manner, "Pardon me, Madam,—I did not intend,—I did not imagine you would

would have been here so soon—or,—or I would not have come."—And then, with a hasty bow, he passed me, and proceeded to the garden.

I was scarce able to stand, so greatly did I feel myself shocked; but, upon my saying, almost involuntarily, "Oh, my Lord!"—he turned back, and, after a short pause, said, "Did you speak to *me*, Madam?"

I could not immediately answer; I seemed *choaked*, and was even forced to support myself by the garden-gate.

Lord Orville, soon recovering his dignity, said, "I know not how to apologise for being, just now, at this place;—and I cannot immediately,—if *ever*,—clear myself from the imputation of impertinent curiosity, to which I fear you will attribute it: however, at present, I will only entreat your pardon, without detaining you any longer." Again he bowed, and left me.

For some moments, I remained fixed to the same spot, and in the same position, immoveably as if I had been transformed to stone. My first impulse was to call him back, and instantly tell him the whole affair; but I checked this desire, though I would have given the world to have indulged it; something like pride aided what I thought due to Mr. Macartney, and I determined

termined not only to keep his secret, but to delay any sort of explanation, till Lord Orville should condescend to request it.

Slowly he walked, and before he entered the house, he looked back, but hastily withdrew his eyes, upon finding I observed him.

Indeed, my dear Sir, you cannot easily imagine a situation more uncomfortable than mine was at that time; to be suspected by Lord Orville of any clandestine actions, wounded my soul; I was too much discomposed to wait for Mr. Macartney, nor, in truth, could I endure to have the design of my staying so well known. Yet I was so extremely agitated, that I could hardly move, and, I have reason to believe, Lord Orville, from the parlour-window, saw me tottering along, for, before I had taken five steps, he came out, and hastening to meet me, said, "I fear you are not well; pray allow me, (offering his arm) to assist you."

"No, my Lord," said I, with all the resolution I could assume; yet I was affected by an attention, at that time so little expected, and forced to turn away my head to conceal my emotion.

"You *must*," said he, with earnestness, "indeed you must,—I am sure you are not well;—refuse me not the honour of assisting

ing you;" and, almoſt forcibly, he took my hand, and drawing it under his arm, obliged me to lean upon him. That I ſubmitted was partly the effect of ſurpriſe at an earneſtneſs ſo uncommon in Lord Orville, and partly, that I did not, juſt then, dare truſt my voice to make any objection.

When we came to the houſe, he led me into the parlour, and to a chair, and begged to know if I would not have a glaſs of water.

"No, my Lord, I thank you," ſaid I, "I am perfectly recovered;" and, riſing, I walked to the window, where, for ſome time, I pretended to be occupied in looking at the garden.

Determined as I was to act honourably by Mr. Macartney, I yet moſt anxiouſly wiſhed to be reſtored to the good opinion of Lord Orville; but his ſilence, and the thoughtfulneſs of his air, diſcouraged me from ſpeaking.

My ſituation ſoon grew diſagreeable and embarraſſing, and I reſolved to return to my chamber till breakfaſt was ready. To remain longer, I feared, might ſeem *aſking* for his enquiries; and I was ſure it would ill become me to be more eager to ſpeak, than he was to hear.

Juſt as I reached the door, turning to me

me haſtily, he ſaid, "Are you going, Miſs Anville?"

"I am, my Lord," anſwered I, yet I ſtopped.

"Perhaps to return to — but I beg your pardon!" he ſpoke with a degree of agitation that made me readily comprehend he meant to *the Garden*, and I inſtantly ſaid, "To my own room, my Lord." And again I would have gone; but, convinced by my anſwer that I underſtood him, I believe he was ſorry for the inſinuation; he approached me with a very ſerious air, though, at the ſame time he forced a ſmile, and ſaid, "I know not what evil genius purſues me this morning, but I ſeem deſtined to do or to ſay ſomething I ought not: I am ſo much aſhamed of myſelf, that I can ſcarce ſolicit your forgiveneſs."

"My forgiveneſs! my Lord?" cried I, abaſhed, rather than elated by his condeſcenſion, "ſurely you cannot—you are not ſerious?"

"Indeed never more ſo; yet if I may be my own interpreter, Miſs Anville's countenance pronounces my pardon."

"I know not, my Lord, how any one can *pardon*, who has never been offended."

"You are very good; yet I could expect no leſs from a ſweetneſs of diſpoſition which baffles all compariſon: will you not think

think I am an encroacher, and that I take advantage of your goodneſs, ſhould I once more remind you of the promiſe you vouchſafed me yeſterday?"

"No, indeed; on the contrary, I ſhall be very happy to acquit myſelf in your Lordſhip's opinion."

"Acquittal you need not," ſaid he, leading me again to the window, "yet I own my curioſity is ſtrongly excited."

When I was ſeated, I found myſelf much at a loſs what to ſay; yet, after a ſhort ſilence, aſſuming all the courage in my power, "Will you not, my Lord," ſaid I, "think me trifling and capricious, ſhould I own I have repented the promiſe I made, and ſhould I entreat your Lordſhip not to inſiſt upon my ſtrict performance of it?—I ſpoke ſo haſtily, that I did not, at the time, conſider the impropriety of what I ſaid."

As he was entirely ſilent, and profoundly attentive, I continued to ſpeak without interruption.

"If your Lordſhip, by any other means, knew the circumſtances attending my acquaintance with Mr. Macartney, I am moſt ſure you would yourſelf diſapprove my relating them. He is a gentleman, and has been very unfortunate,—but I am not,—I think,—at liberty to ſay more; yet I

am

am sure, if he knew your Lordship wished to hear any particulars of his affairs, he would readily consent to my acknowledging them;—shall I, my Lord, ask his permission?"

"*His* affairs!" repeated Lord Orville; "by no means, I have not the least curiosity about them."

"I beg your Lordship's pardon,—but indeed I had understood the contrary."

"Is it possible, Madam, you could suppose the affairs of an utter stranger can excite my curiosity?"

The gravity and coldness with which he asked this question, very much abashed me; but Lord Orville is the most delicate of men, and, presently recollecting himself, he added, "I mean not to speak with indifference of any friend of your's,—far from it; any such will always command my good wishes: yet I own I am rather disappointed; and though I doubt not the justice of your reason, to which I implicitly submit, you must not wonder, that, when upon the point of being honoured with your confidence, I should feel the greatest regret at finding it withdrawn."

Do you think, my dear Sir, I did not, at that moment, require all my resolution to guard me from frankly telling him whatever he wished to hear? yet I rejoice that I did

I did not; for added to the actual wrong I ſhould have done, Lord Orville himſelf, when he had heard, would, I am ſure, have blamed me. Fortunately, this thought occurred to me, and I ſaid, "Your Lordſhip ſhall yourſelf be my judge; the promiſe I made, though voluntary, was raſh and inconſiderate; yet, had it concerned myſelf, I would not have heſitated in fulfilling it; but the gentleman whoſe affairs I ſhould be obliged to relate—"

"Pardon me," cried he, "for interrupting you; yet allow me to aſſure you, I have not the ſlighteſt deſire to be acquainted with his affairs, further than what belongs to the motives which induced you yeſterday morning—" He ſtopped; but there was no occaſion to ſay more.

"That, my Lord," cried I, "I will tell you honeſtly. Mr. Macartney had ſome particular buſineſs with me,—and I could not take the liberty to aſk him hither."

"And why not?—Mrs. Beaumont, I am ſure,—"

"I could not, my Lord, think of intruding upon Mrs. Beaumont's complaiſance; and ſo, with the ſame haſty folly I promiſed your Lordſhip, I much *more* raſhly promiſed to meet him."

"And did you?"

"No,

"No, my Lord," said I, colouring, "I returned before he came."

Again, for some time, we were both silent; yet, unwilling to leave him to reflections which could not but be to my disadvantage, I summoned sufficient courage to say, "There is no young creature, my Lord, who so greatly wants, or so earnestly wishes for, the advice and assistance of her friends, as I do; I am new to the world, and unused to acting for myself, — my intentions are never wilfully blameable, yet I err perpetually!—I have, hitherto, been blest with the most affectionate of friends, and, indeed, the ablest of men, to guide and instruct me upon every occasion;—but he is too distant, now, to be applied to at the moment I want his aid;—and *here*,—there is not a human being whose counsel I can ask.

"Would to Heaven," cried he, with a countenance from which all coldness and gravity were banished, and succeeded by the mildest benevolence, "that *I* were worthy, — and capable, — of supplying the place of such a friend to Miss Anville!"

"You do me but too much honour," said I; "yet I hope your Lordship's candour,—perhaps I ought to say indulgence, —will make some allowance, on account of

of my inexperience, for behaviour, so inconsiderate:—May I, my Lord, hope that you will?"

"May *I*," cried he, "hope that you will pardon the ill-grace with which I have submitted to my disappointment? and that you will permit me," (kissing my hand) "thus to seal my peace?"

"*Our* peace, my Lord," said I, with revived spirits.

"This, then," said he, again pressing it to his lips, "for *our* peace: and now,—are we not friends?"

Just then, the door opened, and I had only time to withdraw my hand, before the ladies came in to breakfast.

I have been, all day, the happiest of human beings!—to be thus reconciled to Lord Orville, and yet to adhere to my resolution,—what could I wish for more?—he, too, has been very chearful, and more attentive, more obliging to me than ever. Yet Heaven forbid I should again be in a similar situation, for I cannot express how much uneasiness I have suffered from the fear of incurring his ill opinion.

But what will poor Mr. Macartney think of me? happy as I am, I much regret the necessity I have been under of disappointing him.

Adieu, my dearest Sir.

LETTER

LETTER VI.

Mr. Villars to Evelina.

Berry Hill, Sept. 28.

DEAD to the world, and equally inſenſible to its pleaſures or its pains, I long ſince bid adieu to all joy, and defiance to all ſorrow, but what ſhould ſpring from my Evelina,—ſole ſource, to me, of all earthly felicity. How ſtrange, then, is it, that the letter in which ſhe tells me ſhe is the *happieſt of human beings*, ſhould give me the moſt mortal inquietude!

Alas, my child!—that innocence, the firſt, beſt gift of Heaven, ſhould, of all others, be the blindeſt to its own danger,—the moſt expoſed to treachery,—and the leaſt able to defend itſelf, in a world where it is little known, leſs valued, and perpetually deceived!

Would to Heaven you were here!—then, by degrees, and with gentleneſs, I might enter upon a ſubject too delicate for diſtant diſcuſſion. Yet is it too intereſting, and the ſituation too critical, to allow of delay. —Oh my Evelina, your ſituation is critical indeed!—your peace of mind is at ſtake, and every chance for your future happineſs may

may depend upon the conduct of the present moment.

Hitherto I have forborne to speak with you upon the most important of all concerns, the state of your heart:—alas, I need no information! I have been silent, indeed, but I have not been blind.

Long, and with the deepest regret, have I perceived the ascendancy which Lord Orville has gained upon your mind.—You will start at the mention of his name,—you will tremble every word you read;—I grieve to give pain to my gentle Evelina, but I dare not any longer spare her.

Your first meeting with Lord Orville was decisive. Lively, fearless, free from all other impressions, such a man as you describe him could not fail exciting your admiration, and the more dangerously, because he seemed as unconscious of his power as you of your weakness; and therefore you had no alarm, either from *his* vanity or *your own* prudence.

Young, animated, entirely off your guard, and thoughtless of consequences, *Imagination* took the reins, and *Reason*, slow-paced, though sure-footed, was unequal to a race with so eccentric and flighty a companion. How rapid was then my Evelina's progress through those regions of fancy and passion

whither

whither her new guide conducted her!—She saw Lord Orville at a ball,—and he was *the most amiable of men!*—She met him again at another,—and *he had every virtue under heaven!*

I mean not to depreciate the merit of Lord Orville, who, one mysterious instance alone excepted, seems to have deserved the idea you formed of his character; but it was not time, it was not the knowledge of his worth, obtained your regard; your new comrade had not patience to wait any trial; her glowing pencil, dipt in the vivid colours of her creative ideas, painted to you, at the moment of your first acquaintance, all the excellencies, all the good and rare qualities, which a great length of time, and intimacy, could alone have really discovered.

You flattered yourself, that your partiality was the effect of esteem, founded upon a general love of merit, and a principle of justice: and your heart, which fell the sacrifice of your error, was totally gone ere you suspected it was in danger.

A thousand times have I been upon the point of shewing you the perils of your situation; but the same inexperience which occasioned your mistake, I hoped, with the assistance of time and absence, would effect a cure: I was, indeed, most unwilling to

deſtroy your illuſion, while I dared hope it might itſelf contribute to the reſtoration of your tranquillity; ſince your ignorance of the danger and force of your attachment, might poſſibly prevent that deſpondency with which young people, in ſimilar circumſtances, are apt to perſuade themſelves that what is only difficult, is abſolutely impoſſible.

But now, ſince you have again met, and are become more intimate than ever, all my hope from ſilence and ſeeming ignorance is at an end.

Awake, then, my dear, my deluded child, awake to the ſenſe of your danger, and exert yourſelf to avoid the evils with which it threatens you,—evils which, to a mind like yours, are moſt to be dreaded, ſecret repining, and concealed, yet conſuming regret! Make a noble effort for the recovery of your peace, which now, with ſorrow I ſee it, depends wholly upon the preſence of Lord Orville. This effort, may, indeed, be painful, but truſt to my experience, when I aſſure you it is requiſite.

You muſt quit him!—his ſight is baneful to your repoſe, his ſociety is death to your future tranquillity! Believe me, my beloved child, my heart aches for your ſuffering, while it dictates its neceſſity.

Could I flatter myſelf that Lord Orville would,

would, indeed, be ſenſible of your worth, and act with a nobleneſs of mind which ſhould prove it congenial to his own, then would I leave my Evelina to the unmoleſted enjoyment of the chearful ſociety and encreaſing regard of a man ſhe ſo greatly admires: but this is not an age in which we may truſt to appearances, and imprudence is much ſooner regretted than repaired. Your health, you tell me, is much mended, —can you then conſent to leave Briſtol?—not abruptly, that I do not deſire, but in a few days from the time you receive this? I will write to Mrs. Selwyn, and tell her how much I wiſh your return; and Mrs. Clinton can take ſufficient care of you.

I have meditated upon every poſſible expedient that might tend to your happineſs, ere I fixed upon exacting from you a compliance which I am convinced will be moſt painful to you;—but I can ſatisfy myſelf in none. This will at leaſt be ſafe, and as to ſucceſs,—we muſt leave it to time.

I am very glad to hear of Mr. Macartney's welfare.

Adieu, my deareſt child; Heaven preſerve and ſtrengthen you!

A. V.

LETTER VII.

Evelina to the Rev. Mr. Villars.

Clifton, Sept. 28.

SWEETLY, moſt ſweetly, have two days more paſſed ſince I wrote; but I have been too much engaged to be exact in my journal.

To-day has been leſs tranquil. It was deſtined for the deciſion of the important bet, and has been productive of general confuſion throughout the houſe. It was ſettled that the race ſhould be run at five o'clock in the afternoon. Lord Merton breakfaſted here, and ſtayed till noon. He wanted to engage the Ladies to *bet on his ſide*, in the true ſpirit of gaming, without ſeeing the racers. But he could only prevail on Lady Louiſa, as Mrs. Selwyn ſaid ſhe never laid a wager againſt her own wiſhes, and Mrs. Beaumont would not *take ſides*. As for *me*, I was not applied to. It is impoſſible for negligence to be more pointed, than that of Lord Merton to me, in the preſence of Lady Louiſa.

But, juſt before dinner, I happened to be alone in the drawing-room, when his Lordſhip ſuddenly returned, and coming in with his uſual familiarity, he was beginning,

ginning, "You ſee, Lady Louiſa,—" but ſtopping ſhort, "Pray where's every body gone?"

"Indeed I don't know, my Lord."

He then ſhut the door, and, with a great alteration in his face and manner, advanced eagerly towards me, and ſaid, "How glad I am, my ſweet girl, to meet you, at laſt, alone! By my ſoul, I began to think there was a plot againſt me, for I've never been able to have you a minute to myſelf." And, very freely, he ſeized my hand.

I was ſo much ſurprized at this addreſs, after having been ſo long totally neglected, that I could make no other anſwer than ſtaring at him with unfeigned aſtoniſhment.

"Why now," continued he, "if you was not the cruelleſt little angel in the world, you would have helped me to ſome expedient: for you ſee how I am watched here; Lady Louiſa's eyes are never off me. She gives me a charming foretaſte of the pleaſures of a wife! however, it won't laſt long."

Diſguſted to the greateſt degree, I attempted to draw away my hand, but I believe I ſhould not have ſucceeded, if Mrs. Beaumont had not made her appearance. He turned from me with the greateſt aſſurance, and ſaid, "How are you, Ma'am?—

how is Lady Louisa?—you see I can't live a moment out of the house."

Could you, my dearest Sir, have believed it possible for such effrontery to be in man?

Before dinner, came Mr. Coverley, and before five o'clock, Mr. Lovel and some other company. The place marked out for the race, was a gravel-walk in Mrs. Beaumont's garden, and the length of the ground twenty yards. When we were summoned to the *course*, the two poor old women made their appearance. Though they seemed very healthy for their time of life, they yet looked so weak, so infirm, so feeble, that I could feel no sensation but that of pity at the sight. However, this was not the general sense of the company, for they no sooner came forward, than they were greeted with a laugh from every beholder, Lord Orville excepted, who looked very grave during the whole transaction. Doubtless he must be greatly discontented at the dissipated conduct and extravagance, of a man with whom he is, soon, to be so nearly connected.

For some time, the scene was truly ridiculous; the agitation of the parties concerned, and the bets that were laid upon the old women, were absurd beyond measure. *Who are you for?* and *whose side are*

you

you of? was echoed from mouth to mouth by the whole company. Lord Merton and Mr. Coverley were both so excessively gay and noisy, that I soon found they had been too free in drinking to their success. They handed, with loud shouts, the old women to the race-ground, and encouraged them, by liberal promises, to exert themselves.

When the signal was given for them to set off, the poor creatures, feeble and frightened, ran against each other, and neither of them able to support the shock, they both fell on the ground.

Lord Merton and Mr. Coverley flew to their assistance. Seats were brought for them, and they each drank a glass of wine. They complained of being much bruised; for, heavy and helpless, they had not been able to save themselves, but fell with their whole weight upon the gravel. However, as they seemed equal sufferers, both parties were too eager to have the affair deferred.

Again, therefore, they set off, and hobbled along, nearly even with each other, for some time, yet frequently, and to the inexpressible diversion of the company, they stumbled and tottered; and the confused hallowing of "*Now Coverley!*" "*Now Merton!*" rung from side to side during the whole affair.

Not long after, a foot of one of the poor women slipt, and, with great force, she came again to the ground. Involuntarily, I sprung forward to assist her, but Lord Merton, to whom she did not belong, stopped me, calling out "No foul play! no foul play!"

Mr. Coverley, then, repeating the same words, went himself to help her, and insisted that the other should stop. A debate ensued; but the poor creature was too much hurt to move, and declared her utter inability to make another attempt. Mr. Coverley was quite brutal; he swore at her with unmanly rage, and seemed scarce able to refrain even from striking her.

Lord Merton then, in great rapture, said it was a *hollow thing*; but Mr. Coverley contended that the fall was accidental, and time should be allowed for the woman to recover. However, all the company being against him, he was pronounced the loser.

We then went to the drawing-room, to tea. After which, the evening being remarkably warm, we all walked in the garden. Lord Merton was quite riotous, and Lady Louisa in high spirits; but Mr. Coverley endeavoured in vain to conceal his chagrin.

As Lord Orville was thoughtful, and walked by himself, I expected that, as usual,

usual, *I* should pass unnoticed, and be left to my own meditations; but this was not the case, for Lord Merton, entirely off his guard, giddy equally from wine and success, was very troublesome to me; and, regardless of the presence of Lady Louisa, which, hitherto, has restrained him even from common civility, he attached himself to me, during the walk, with a freedom of gallantry that put me extremely out of countenance. He paid me the most high-flown compliments, and frequently and forcibly seized my hand, though I repeatedly, and with undissembled anger, drew it back. Lord Orville, I saw, watched us with earnestness, and Lady Louisa's smiles were converted into looks of disdain.

I could not bear to be thus situated, and complaining I was tired, I quickened my pace, with intention to return to the house; but Lord Merton, hastily following, caught my hand, and saying the *day was his own*, vowed he would not let me go.

"You *must*, my Lord," cried I, extremely flurried.

"You are the most charming girl in the world," said he, "and never looked better than at this moment."

"My Lord," cried Mrs. Selwyn, advancing

vancing to us, "you don't conſider, that the better Miſs Anville looks, the more ſtriking is the contraſt with your Lordſhip; therefore, for your own ſake, I would adviſe you not to hold her."

"Egad, my Lord," cried Mr. Coverley, "I don't ſee what right you have to the beſt *old*, and the beſt *young* woman too, in the ſame day."

"*Beſt young woman!*" repeated Mr. Lovel; "'pon honour, Jack, you have made a moſt unfortunate ſpeech; however, if Lady Louiſa can pardon you,—and her Ladyſhip is all goodneſs,—I am ſure nobody elſe can, for you have committed an outrageous ſoleciſm in good manners."

"And pray, Sir," ſaid Mrs. Selwyn, "under what denomination may your own ſpeech paſs?"

Mr. Lovel, turning another way, affected not to hear her: and Mr. Coverley, bowing to Lady Louiſa, ſaid, "Her Ladyſhip is well acquainted with my devotion,—but, egad, I don't know how it is,—I had always an unlucky turn at an epigram, and never could reſiſt a ſmart play upon words in my life."

"Pray, my Lord," cried I, "let go my hand! pray, Mrs. Selwyn, ſpeak for me."

"My Lord," ſaid Mrs. Selwyn, "in

detaining Miſs Anville any longer, you only loſe time, for we are already as well convinced of your valour and your ſtrength as if you were to hold her an age."

"My Lord," ſaid Mrs. Beaumont, "I muſt beg leave to interfere; I know not if Lady Louiſa can pardon you, but, as this young Lady is at my houſe, I do not chuſe to have her made uneaſy."

"*I* pardon him!" cried Lady Louiſa, "I declare I am monſtrous glad to get rid of him."

"Egad, my Lord," cried Mr. Coverley, "while you are graſping at a ſhadow, you'll loſe a ſubſtance; you'd beſt make your peace while you can."

"Pray, Mr. Coverley, be quiet," ſaid Lady Louiſa, peeviſhly, "for I declare I won't ſpeak to him. Brother," (taking hold of Lord Orville's arm) "will you walk in with me."

"Would to Heaven," cried I, frightened to ſee how much Lord Merton was in liquor, "that I, too, had a brother!—and then I ſhould not be expoſed to ſuch treatment!"

Lord Orville, inſtantly quitting Lady Louiſa, ſaid, "Will Miſs Anville allow *me* the honour of taking that title?" and then, without waiting for any anſwer, he diſengaged me from Lord Merton, and,

handing me to Lady Louiſa, "Let me," added he, "take equal care of *both* my ſiſters;" and then, deſiring her to take hold of one arm, and begging me to make uſe of the other, we reached the houſe in a moment. Lord Merton, diſordered as he was, attempted not to ſtop us.

As ſoon as we entered the houſe, I withdrew my arm, and courtſied my thanks, for my heart was too full for ſpeech. Lady Louiſa, evidently hurt at her brother's condeſcenſion, and piqued extremely by Lord Merton's behaviour, ſilently drew away her's, and biting her lips, with a look of infinite vexation, walked ſullenly up the hall.

Lord Orville aſked her if ſhe would not go into the parlour?

"No," anſwered ſhe, haughtily; "I leave you and your new ſiſter together;" and then ſhe walked up ſtairs.

I was quite confounded at the pride and rudeneſs of this ſpeech. Lord Orville himſelf ſeemed thunderſtruck; I turned from him, and went into the parlour; he followed me, ſaying, "Muſt I, now, apologiſe to Miſs Anville for the liberty of my interference?—or ought I to apologiſe that I did not, as I wiſhed, interfere ſooner?"

"O my Lord," cried I, with an emotion I could not repreſs, "it is from you alone

alone I meet with any respect,—all others treat me with impertinence or contempt!"

I am sorry I had not more command of myself, as he had reason, just then, to suppose I particularly meant his sister; which, I am sure, must very much hurt him.

"Good Heaven," cried he, "that so much sweetness and merit can fail to excite the love and admiration so justly their due! I cannot,—I dare not express to you half the indignation I feel at this moment!"

"I am sorry, my Lord," said I, more calmly, "to have raised it; but yet,—in a situation that calls for protection, to meet only with mortifications,—indeed, I am but ill formed to bear them!"

"My *dear* Miss Anville," cried he, warmly, "allow *me* to be your friend; think of me as if I were indeed your brother, and let me entreat you to accept my best services, if there is any thing in which I can be so happy as to shew my regard,—my respect for you!"

Before I had time to speak, the rest of the party entered the parlour, and, as I did not wish to see any thing more of Lord Merton, at least before he had slept, I determined to leave it. Lord Orville, seeing my design, said, as I passed him, "Will you go?" "Had not I best, my Lord?" said I. "I am afraid," said he, smiling,

"since

"since I must now speak as your *brother*, I am afraid you *had*;—you see you may trust me, since I can advise against my own interest."

I then left the room, and have been writing ever since. And methinks I can never lament the rudeness of Lord Merton, as it has more than ever confirmed to me the esteem of Lord Orville.

LETTER VIII.

Evelina in continuation.

Sept. 30.

OH Sir, what a strange incident have I to recite! what a field of conjecture to open!

Yesterday evening, we all went to an assembly. Lord Orville presented tickets to the whole family, and did me the honour, to the no small surprise of all here, I believe, to dance with me. But every day abounds in fresh instances of his condescending politeness, and he now takes every opportunity of calling me his *friend*, and his *sister*.

Lord Merton offered a ticket to Lady Louisa; but she was so much incensed against

againſt him, that ſhe refuſed it with the utmoſt diſdain; neither could he prevail upon her to dance with him; ſhe ſat ſtill the whole evening, and deigned not to look at, or ſpeak to him. To me, her behaviour is almoſt the ſame, for ſhe is cold, diſtant, and haughty, and her eyes expreſs the greateſt contempt. But for Lord Orville, how miſerable would my reſidence here make me!

We were joined, in the ball-room, by Mr. Coverley, Mr. Lovel, and Lord Merton, who looked as if he was doing penance, and ſat all the evening next to Lady Louiſa, vainly endeavouring to appeaſe her anger.

Lord Orville began the minuets; he danced with a young Lady who ſeemed to engage the general attention, as ſhe had not been ſeen here before. She is pretty, and looks mild and good-humoured.

"Pray, Mr. Lovel," ſaid Lady Louiſa, "who is that?"

"Miſs Belmont," anſwered he, "the young heireſs; ſhe came to the Wells yeſterday."

Struck with the name, I involuntarily repeated it, but nobody heard me.

"What is her family?" ſaid Mrs. Beaumont.

"Have you not heard of her, Ma'am?" cried

cried he, "she is only daughter and heiress of Sir John Belmont."

Good Heaven, how did I start! the name struck my ear like a thunder-bolt. Mrs. Selwyn, who immediately looked at me, said, "Be calm, my dear, and we will learn the truth of all this."

Till then, I had never imagined her to be acquainted with my story; but she has since told me, that she knew my unhappy mother, and was well informed of the whole affair.

She asked Mr. Lovel a multitude of questions, and I gathered from his answers, that this young Lady was just come from abroad, with Sir John Belmont, who was now in London; that she was under the care of his sister, Mrs. Paterson; and that she would inherit a considerable estate.

I cannot express the strange feelings with which I was agitated during this recital. What, my dearest Sir, can it possibly mean? Did you ever hear of any after-marriage?—or must I suppose, that, while the lawful child is rejected, another is adopted?—I know not what to think! I am bewildered with a contrariety of ideas!

When we came home, Mrs. Selwyn passed more than an hour in my room, conversing upon this subject. She says that I ought instantly to go to town, find out my father,

and

and have the affair cleared up. She assures me I have too strong a resemblance to my dear, though unknown mother, to allow of the least hesitation in my being owned, when once I am seen. For my part, I have no wish but to act by your direction.

I cannot give any account of the evening; so disturbed, so occupied am I by this subject, that I can think of no other. I have entreated Mrs. Selwyn to observe the strictest secrecy, and she has promised that she will. Indeed, she has too much sense to be idly communicative.

Lord Orville took notice of my being absent and silent, but I ventured not to entrust him with the cause. Fortunately, he was not of the party at the time Mr. Lovel made the discovery.

Mrs. Selwyn says, that if you approve my going to town, she will herself accompany me. I had a thousand times rather ask the protection of Mrs. Mirvan, but, after this offer, that will not be possible.

Adieu, my dearest Sir. I am sure you will write immediately, and I shall be all impatience till your letter arrives.

LETTER IX.

Evelina in continuation.

Oct. 1st.

GOOD God, my dear Sir, what a wonderful tale have I again to relate! even yet, I am not recovered from my extreme surprise.

Yesterday morning, as soon as I had finished my hasty letter, I was summoned to attend a walking party to the Hotwells. It consisted only of Mrs. Selwyn and Lord Orville. The latter walked by my side all the way, and his conversation dissipated my uneasiness, and insensibly restored my serenity.

At the pump-room, I saw Mr. Macartney; I courtsied to him twice ere he would speak to me. When he did, I began to apologise for having disappointed him; but I did not find it very easy to excuse myself, as Lord Orville's eyes, with an expression of anxiety that distressed me, turned from him to me, and me to him, every word I spoke. Convinced, however, that I had really trifled with Mr. Macartney, I scrupled not to beg his pardon. He was

then,

then, not merely appeased, but even grateful.

He requested me to see him to-morrow: but I had not the folly to be again guilty of an indiscretion which had, already, caused me so much uneasiness; and therefore, I told him, frankly, that it was not in my power, at present, to see him, but by accident; and, to prevent his being offended, I hinted to him the reason I could not receive him as I wished to do.

When I had satisfied both him and myself upon this subject, I turned to Lord Orville, and saw, with concern, the gravity of his countenance, I would have spoken to him, but knew not how; I believe, however, he read my thoughts, for, in a little time, with a sort of serious smile, he said, "Does not Mr. Macartney complain of his disappointment?"

"Not much, my Lord."

"And how have you appeased him?" Finding I hesitated what to answer, "Am I not your brother," continued he, "and must I not enquire into your affairs?"

"Certainly, my Lord," said I, laughing, "I only wish it were better worth your Lordship's while."

"Let me, then, make immediate use of my privilege. When shall you see Mr. Macartney again?"

"Indeed,

"Indeed, my Lord, I can't tell."

"But,—do you know that I ſhall not ſuffer *my ſiſter* to make a private appointment?"

"Pray, my Lord," cried I, earneſtly, "uſe that word no more! Indeed you ſhock me extremely."

"That would I not do for the world," cried he; "yet you know not how warmly, how deeply I am intereſted, not only in all your concerns, but in all your actions."

This ſpeech,—the moſt particular one Lord Orville had ever made to me, ended our converſation at that time; for I was too much ſtruck by it to make any anſwer.

Soon after, Mr. Macartney, in a low voice, entreated me not to deny him the gratification of returning the money. While he was ſpeaking, the young Lady I ſaw yeſterday at the aſſembly, with the large party, entered the pump-room. Mr. Macartney turned as pale as death, his voice faltered, and he ſeemed not to know what he ſaid. I was myſelf almoſt equally diſturbed, by the croud of confuſed ideas that occurred to me. Good Heaven, thought I, why ſhould he be thus agitated?—is it poſſible this can be the young Lady he loved?—

In a few minutes, we quitted the pump-room, and though I twice wiſhed Mr. Macartney

cartney good morning, he was ſo abſent he did not hear me.

We did not immediately return to Clifton, as Mrs. Selwyn had buſineſs at a pamphlet-ſhop. While ſhe was looking at ſome new poems, Lord Orville again aſked me when I ſhould ſee Mr. Macartney?

"Indeed, my Lord," cried I, "I know not, but I would give the univerſe for a few moments converſation with him!" I ſpoke this with a ſimple ſincerity, and was not aware of the force of my own words.

"The univerſe!" repeated he, "Good God, Miſs Anville, do you ſay this to *me?*"

"I would ſay it," returned I, "to any body, my Lord."

"I beg your pardon," ſaid he, in a voice that ſhewed him ill pleaſed, "I am anſwered!"

"My Lord," cried I, "you muſt not judge hardly of me. I ſpoke inadvertently; but if you knew the painful ſuſpenſe I ſuffer at this moment, you would not be ſurpriſed at what I have ſaid."

"And would a meeting with Mr. Macartney relieve you from that ſuſpenſe?"

"Yes, my Lord, two words might be ſufficient."

"Would to Heaven," cried he, after a ſhort

ſhort pauſe, "that I were worthy to know their import!"

"Worthy, my Lord!—O, if that were all, your Lordſhip could aſk nothing I ſhould not be ready to anſwer! If I were but at liberty to ſpeak, I ſhould be *proud* of your Lordſhip's enquiries; but indeed I am not, I have not any right to communicate the affairs of Mr. Macartney,—your Lordſhip cannot ſuppoſe I have."

"I will own to you," anſwered he, "I know not *what* to ſuppoſe; yet there ſeems a frankneſs even in your myſtery,—and ſuch an air of openneſs in your countenance, that I am willing to hope—" He ſtopped a moment, and then added, "This meeting, you ſay, is eſſential to your repoſe?"

"I did not ſay *that*, my Lord; but yet I have the moſt important reaſons for wiſhing to ſpeak to him."

He pauſed a few minutes, and then ſaid, with warmth, "Yes, you *ſhall* ſpeak to him!—I will myſelf aſſiſt you!—Miſs Anville, I am ſure, cannot form a wiſh againſt propriety, I will aſk no queſtions, I will rely upon her own purity, and uninformed, blindfold as I am, I will ſerve her with all my power!" And then he went into the ſhop, leaving me ſo ſtrangely affected by his

his generous behaviour, that I almoſt wiſhed to follow him with my thanks.

When Mrs. Selwyn had tranſacted her affairs, we returned home.

The moment dinner was over, Lord Orville went out, and did not come back till juſt as we were ſummoned to ſupper. This is the longeſt time he has ſpent from the houſe ſince I have been at Clifton, and you cannot imagine, my dear Sir, how much I miſſed him. I ſcarce knew before how infinitely I am indebted to him alone for the happineſs I have enjoyed ſince I have been at Mrs. Beaumont's.

As I generally go down ſtairs laſt, he came to me the moment the ladies had paſſed by, and ſaid, "Shall you be at home to-morrow morning?"

"I believe ſo, my Lord."

"And will you, then, receive a viſitor for me?"

"For you, my Lord!"

"Yes;—I have made acquaintance with Mr. Macartney, and he has promiſed to call upon me to-morrow about three o'clock."

And then, taking my hand, he led me down ſtairs.

O Sir!—was there ever ſuch another man as Lord Orville?—Yes, *one* other now reſides at Berry Hill!

This

This morning there has been a great deal of company here, but at the time appointed by Lord Orville, doubtleſs with that conſideration, the parlour is almoſt always empty, as every body is dreſſing.

Mrs. Beaumont, however, was not gone up ſtairs, when Mr. Macartney ſent in his name.

Lord Orville immediately ſaid, "Beg the favour of him to walk in. You ſee, Madam, that I conſider myſelf as at home."

"I hope ſo," anſwered Mrs. Beaumont, "or I ſhould be very uneaſy."

Mr. Macartney then entered. I believe we both felt very conſcious to whom the viſit was paid: but Lord Orville received him as his own gueſt, and not merely entertained him as ſuch while Mrs. Beaumont remained in the room, but for ſome time after ſhe had left it: a delicacy that ſaved me from the embarraſſment I ſhould have felt, had he immediately quitted us.

In a few minutes, however, he gave Mr. Macartney a book,—for I, too, by way of pretence for continuing in the room, pretended to be reading,—and begged he would be ſo good as to look it over, while he anſwered a note, which he would diſpatch in a few minutes, and return to him.

When he was gone, we both parted with our books, and Mr. Macartney, again producing the paper with the money, beſought me to accept it.

"Pray," ſaid I, ſtill declining it, "did you know the young lady who came into the pump-room yeſterday morning?"

"Know her!" repeated he, changing colour, "Oh, but too well!"

"Indeed!"

"Why, Madam, do you aſk?"

"I muſt beſeech you to ſatisfy me further upon this ſubject; pray tell me who ſhe is."

"Inviolably as I meant to keep my ſecret, I can refuſe you, Madam, nothing; —that lady—is the daughter of Sir John Belmont!—of my father!"

"Gracious Heaven!" cried I, involuntarily laying my hand on his arm, "you are then—" *my brother*, I would have ſaid, but my voice failed me, and I burſt into tears.

"Oh, Madam," cried he, "what does this mean?—What can thus diſtreſs you?"

I could not anſwer, but held out my hand to him. He ſeemed greatly ſurpriſed, and talked in high terms of my condeſcenſion.

"Spare yourſelf," cried I, wiping my eyes, "ſpare yourſelf this miſtake,—you

have a *right* to all I can do for you; the similarity of our circumstances—"

We were then interrupted by the entrance of Mrs. Selwyn; and Mr. Macartney, finding no probability of our being left alone, was obliged to take leave, though, I believe, very reluctantly, while in such suspence.

Mrs. Selwyn then, by dint of interrogatories, drew from me the state of this affair. She is so penetrating, that there is no possibility of evading to give her satisfaction.

Is not this a strange event? Good Heaven, how little did I think that the visits I so unwillingly paid at Mr. Branghton's would have introduced me to so near a relation! I will never again regret the time I spent in town this summer: a circumstance so fortunate will always make me think of it with pleasure.

* * * *

I have just received your letter,—and it has almost broken my heart!—Oh, Sir! the illusion is over indeed!—How vainly have I flattered, how miserably deceived myself! Long since, doubtful of the situation of my heart, I dreaded a scrutiny,—

but

but now, now that I have so long escaped, I began, indeed, to think my safety insured, to hope that my fears were causeless, and to believe that my good opinion and esteem of Lord Orville might be owned without suspicion, and felt without danger:—miserably deceived, indeed!

His sight is baneful to my repose,—his society is death to my future tranquillity!—Oh, Lord Orville! could I have believed that a friendship so grateful to my heart, so soothing to my distresses,—a friendship which, in every respect, did me so much honour, would only serve to embitter all my future moments!—What a strange, what an unhappy circumstance, that my gratitude, though so justly excited, should be so fatal to my peace!

Yes, Sir, I *will* quit him;—would to Heaven I could at this moment! without seeing him again,—without trusting to my now conscious emotion!—Oh, Lord Orville, how little do you know the evils I owe to you! how little suppose that, when most dignified by your attention, I was most to be pitied,—and when most exalted by your notice, you were most my enemy!

You, Sir, relied upon my ignorance;—I, alas, upon your experience; and, when-

ever I doubted the weakneſs of my heart, the idea that *you* did not ſuſpect it, reaſſured me,—reſtored my courage, and confirmed my error!—Yet am I moſt ſenſible of the kindneſs of your ſilence.

Oh, Sir? why have I ever quitted you! why been expoſed to dangers to which I am ſo unequal?

But I will leave this place,—leave Lord Orville,—leave him, perhaps, for ever!—no matter; your counſel, your goodneſs, may teach me how to recover the peace and the ſerenity of which my unguarded folly has beguiled me. To you alone do I truſt,—in you alone confide for every future hope I may form.

The more I conſider of parting with Lord Orville, the leſs fortitude do I feel to bear the ſeparation;—the friendſhip he has ſhewn me,—his politeneſs,—his ſweetneſs of manners,—his concern in my affairs,—his ſolicitude to oblige me,—all, all to be given up!—

No, I cannot tell him I am going,—I dare not truſt myſelf to take leave of him,—I will run away without ſeeing him:—implicitly will I follow your advice, avoid his ſight, and ſhun his ſociety!

To-morrow morning I will ſet off for Berry Hill. Mrs. Selwyn and Mrs. Beaumont

mont ſhall alone know my intention. And to-day,—I will ſpend in my own room. The readineſs of my obedience is the only atonement I can offer, for the weakneſs which calls for its exertion.

Can you, will you, moſt honoured, moſt dear Sir! ſole prop by which the poor Evelina is ſupported,—can you, without reproach, without diſpleaſure, receive the child you have ſo careſully reared,—from whoſe educution better fruit might have been expected, and who, bluſhing for her unworthineſs, fears to meet the eye by which ſhe has been cheriſhed?—Oh yes, I am ſure you will! Your Evelina's errors are thoſe of the judgment,—and you, I well know, pardon all but thoſe of the heart!

LETTER X.

Evelina in continuation.

Clifton, October 1ſt.

I Have only time, my deareſt Sir, for three words, to overtake my laſt letter, and prevent your expecting me immediately; for, when I communicated my intention

tion to Mrs. Selwyn, she would not hear of it, and declared it would be highly ridiculous for me to go before I received an answer to my intelligence concerning the journey from Paris. She has, therefore, insisted upon my waiting till your next letter arrives. I hope you will not be displeased at my compliance, though it is rather against my own judgment; but Mrs. Selwyn quite overpowered me with the force of her arguments. I will, however, see very little of Lord Orville; I will never come down stairs before breakfast; give up all my walks in the garden,—seat myself next to Mrs. Selwyn, and not merely avoid his conversation, but shun his presence. I will exert all the prudence and all the resolution in my power, to prevent this short delay from giving you any further uneasiness.

Adieu, my dearest Sir. I shall not now leave Clifton till I have your directions.

LETTER XI.

Evelina in continuation.

October 2d.

YESTERDAY, from the time I received your kind, though heart-piercing letter, I kept my room,—for I was equally unable and unwilling to see Lord Orville: but this morning, finding I seemed destined to pass a few days longer here, I endeavoured to calm my spirits, and to appear as usual; though I determined to avoid him to the utmost of my power. Indeed, as I entered the parlour, when called to breakfast, my thoughts were so much occupied with your letter, that I felt as much confusion at his sight, as if he had himself been informed of its contents.

Mrs. Beaumont made me a slight compliment upon my recovery, for I had pleaded illness to excuse keeping my room: Lady Louisa spoke not a word: but Lord Orville, little imagining himself the cause of my indisposition, enquired concerning my health with the most distinguishing politeness. I hardly made any answer, and, for the first time since I have been here, contrived to sit at some distance from him.

I could not help obſerving that my reſerve ſurpriſed him; yet he perſiſted in his civilities, and ſeemed to wiſh to remove it. But I paid him very little attention; and the moment breakfaſt was over, inſtead of taking a book, or walking in the garden, I retired to my own room.

Soon after, Mrs. Selwyn came to tell me that Lord Orville had been propoſing I ſhould take an airing, and perſuading her to let him drive us both in his phaeton. She delivered the meſſage with an archneſs that made me bluſh; and added, that an airing, in *my Lord Orville's carriage*, could not fail to revive my ſpirits. There is no poſſibility of eſcaping her diſcernment; ſhe has frequently rallied me upon his Lordſhip's attention,—and, alas!—upon the pleaſure with which I have received it! However, I abſolutely refuſed the offer.

"Well," ſaid ſhe, laughing, "I cannot juſt now indulge you with any ſolicitation; for, to tell you the truth, I have buſineſs to tranſact at the Wells, and am glad to be excuſed myſelf. I would aſk you to walk with *me*,—but, ſince *Lord Orville* is refuſed, *I* have not the preſumption to hope for ſucceſs."

"Indeed," cried I, "you are miſtaken; I will attend you with pleaſure."

"O rare coquetry!" cried ſhe, "ſurely

it

it must be inherent in our sex, or it could not have been imbibed at Berry Hill."

I had not spirits to answer her, and therefore put on my hat and cloak in silence.

"I presume," continued she, drily, "his Lordship may walk with us?"

"If so, Madam," said I, "you will have a companion, and I will stay at home."

"My dear child," cried she, "did you bring the certificate of your birth with you?"

"Dear Madam, no!"

"Why then, we shall never be known again at Berry Hill."

I felt too conscious to enjoy her pleasantry; but I believe she was determined to torment me; for she asked if she should inform Lord Orville that I desired him not to be of the party?"

"By no means, Madam;—but, indeed, I had rather not walk myself."

"My dear," cried she, "I really do not know you this morning,—you have certainly been taking a lesson of Lady Louisa."

She then went down stairs; but presently returning, told me she had acquainted Lord Orville that I did not choose to go out in the phaeton, but preferred a walk, *tête-a-tête* with her, by way of *variety*.

I said nothing, but was really vexed. She bid me go down stairs, and said she would follow immediately.

Lord Orville met me in the hall. "I fear," said he, "Miss Anville is not yet quite well?" and he would have taken my hand, but I turned from him, and courtsying slightly, went into the parlour.

Mrs. Beaumont and Lady Louisa were at work: Lord Merton was talking with the latter; for he has now made his peace, and is again received into favour.

I seated myself, as usual, by the window. Lord Orville, in a few minutes, came to me, and said, "Why is Miss Anville so grave?"

"Not grave, my Lord," said I, "only stupid;" and I took up a book.

"You will go," said he, after a short pause, "to the assembly to-night?"

"No, my Lord, certainly not."

"Neither then will I; for I should be sorry to sully the remembrance I have of the happiness I enjoyed at the last."

Mrs. Selwyn then coming in, general enquiries were made, to all but me, of who would go to the assembly. Lord Orville instantly declared he had letters to write at home; but every one else settled to go.

I then haſtened Mrs. Selwyn away, though not before ſhe had ſaid to Lord Orville, "Pray, has your Lordſhip obtained Miſs Anville's leave to favour us with your company?"

"I have not, Madam," anſwered he, "had the vanity to aſk it."

During our walk, Mrs. Selwyn tormented me unmercifully. She told me, that ſince I declined any addition to our party, I muſt, doubtleſs, be conſcious of my own powers of entertainment; and begged me, therefore, to exert them freely. I repented a thouſand times having conſented to walk alone with her: for though I made the moſt painful efforts to appear in ſpirits, her raillery quite overpowered me.

We went firſt to the pump-room. It was full of company! and the moment we entered, I heard a murmuring of, "*That's ſhe!*" and, to my great confuſion, I ſaw every eye turned towards me. I pulled my hat over my face, and, by the aſſiſtance of Mrs. Selwyn, endeavoured to ſcreen myſelf from obſervation: nevertheleſs, I found I was ſo much the object of general attention, that I entreated her to haſten away. But unfortunately, ſhe had entered into converſation, very earneſtly, with a gentleman of her acquaintance, and would not liſten to me, but ſaid,

that if I was tired of waiting, I might walk on to the milliner's with the Miss Watkins, two young ladies I had seen at Mrs. Beaumont's, who were going thither.

I accepted the offer very readily, and away we went. But we had not gone three yards, before we were followed by a party of young men, who took every possible opportunity of looking at us, and, as they walked behind, talked aloud, in a manner at once unintelligible and absurd. "Yes," cried one, "'tis certainly she!—mark but her *blushing cheek!*"

"And then her *eye*—her *downcast eye!*—cried another.

"True, oh most true," said a third, "*every beauty is her own!*"

"But then," said the first, "her *mind*,—now the difficulty is, to find out the truth of *that*, for she will not say a word."

"She is *timid*," answered another; "mark but her *timid air*."

During this conversation, we walked on silent and quick; as we knew not to whom it was particularly addressed, we were all equally ashamed, and equally desirous to avoid such unaccountable observations.

Soon after, we were caught in a shower of rain. We hurried on, and these gentlemen,

men, following us, offered their services in the most pressing manner, begging us to make use of their arms; and while I almost ran, in order to avoid their impertinence, I was suddenly met by Sir Clement Willoughby!

We both started; "Good God," he exclaimed, "Miss Anville!" and then, regarding my tormentors with an air of displeasure, he earnestly enquired, if any thing had alarmed me?

"No, no;" cried I, for I found no difficulty, now, to disengage myself from these youths, who, probably, concluding from the commanding air of Sir Clement, that he had a right to protect me, quietly gave way to him, and entirely quitted us.

With his usual impetuosity, he then began a thousand enquiries, accompanied with as many compliments; and he told me, that he arrived at Bristol but this morning, which he had entirely devoted to endeavours to discover where I lodged.

"Did you know, then," said I, "that I was at Bristol?"

"Would to Heaven," cried he, "that I *could* remain in ignorance of your proceedings with the same contentment you do of mine! then should I not for ever journey upon the wings of hope, to meet my own

own despair! *You* cannot even judge of the cruelty of my fate, for the ease and serenity of your mind incapacitates you from feeling for the agitation of mine!"

The ease and serenity of *my* mind! alas, how little do I merit those words!

"But," added he, "had *accident* brought me hither, had I not known of your journey, the voice of fame would have proclaimed it to me instantly upon my arrival."

"The voice of fame!" repeated I.

"Yes, for your's was the first name I heard at the pump-room. But had I *not* heard your name, such a description could have painted no one else."

"Indeed," said I, "I do not understand you." But, just then arriving at the milliner's, our conversation ended; for Miss Watkins called me to look at caps and ribbons.

Sir Clement, however, has the art of being always *at home*; he was very soon engaged, as busily as ourselves, in looking at lace ruffles. Yet he took an opportunity of saying to me in a low voice, "How charmed I am to see you look so well! I was told you were ill,—but I never saw you in better health,—never more infinitely lovely!"

I turned

I turned away, to examine the ribbons, and soon after Mrs. Selwyn made her appearance. I found that she was acquainted with Sir Clement, and her manner of speaking to him, convinced me that he was a favourite with her.

When their mutual compliments were over, she turned to me, and said, "Pray, Miss Anville, how long can you live without nourishment?"

"Indeed, Ma'am," said I, laughing, "I have never tried."

"Because so long, and no longer," answered she, "you may remain at Bristol."

"Why, what is the matter, Ma'am?"

"The matter!—why, all the ladies are at open war with you,—the whole pump-room is in confusion; and you, innocent as you pretend to look, are the cause. However, if you take my advice, you will be very careful how you eat and drink during your stay."

I begged her to explain herself: and she then told me, that a copy of verses had been dropt in the pump-room, and read there aloud: "The Beauties of the Wells," said she, "are all mentioned, but *you* are the Venus to whom the prize is given."

"Is it then possible," cried Sir Clement, "that you have not seen these verses?"

"I hardly

"I hardly know," answered I, "whether *any* body has."

"I assure you," said Mrs. Selwyn, "if you give *me* the invention of them, you do me an honour I by no means deserve."

"I wrote down in my tablets," said Sir Clement, "the stanzas which concern Miss Anville, this morning at the pump-room; and I will do myself the honour of copying them for her this evening."

"But why the part that concerns *Miss Anville?*" said Mrs. Selwyn; "Did you ever see her before this morning?"

"O yes," answered he, "I have had that happiness frequently at Captain Mirvan's. Too, too frequently!" added he, in a low voice, as Mrs. Selwyn turned to the milliner: and, as soon as she was occupied in examining some trimmings, he came to me, and, almost whether I would or not, entered into conversation with me.

"I have a thousand things," cried he, "to say to you. Pray where are you?"

"With Mrs. Selwyn, Sir."

"Indeed — then, for once, Chance is my friend. And how long have you been here?"

"About three weeks."

"Good Heaven! what an anxious search have I had, to discover your abode, since you so suddenly left town! The terma-

gant Madame Duval refuſed me all intelligence. Oh, Miſs Anville, did you know what I have endured! the ſleepleſs, reſtleſs ſtate of ſuſpence I have been tortured with, you could not, all cruel as you are, you could not have received me with ſuch frigid indifference!"

"*Received* you, Sir!

"Why, is not my viſit to *you*? Do you think I ſhould have made this journey, but for the happineſs of again ſeeing you?"

"Indeed it is poſſible I might,—ſince ſo many others do."

"Cruel, cruel girl! you *know* that I adore you! you *know* you are the miſtreſs of my ſoul, and arbitreſs of my fate!"

Mrs. Selwyn then advancing to us, he aſſumed a more diſengaged air, and aſked if he ſhould not have the pleaſure of ſeeing her, in the evening, at the aſſembly?

"Oh yes," cried ſhe, "we ſhall certainly be there; ſo you may bring the verſes with you, if Miſs Anville can wait for them ſo long."

"I hope, then," returned he, "that you will do me the honour to dance with me?"

I thanked him, but ſaid I ſhould not be at the aſſembly.

"Not be at the aſſembly!" cried Mrs. Selwyn,

Selwyn, "Why, have *you*, too, letters to write?"

She looked at me with a significant archness that made me colour; and I haſtily anſwered, "No, indeed, Ma'am!"

"You have not!" cried ſhe, yet more drily, "then pray, my dear, do you ſtay at home to *help*,—or to *hinder* others?"

"To do neither, Ma'am," anſwered I, in much confuſion; "ſo, if you pleaſe, I will *not* ſtay at home."

"You allow me, then," ſaid Sir Clement, "to hope for the honour of your hand?"

I only bowed,—for the dread of Mrs. Selwyn's raillery made me not dare refuſe him.

Soon after this we walked home; Sir Clement accompanied us, and the converſation that paſſed between Mrs. Selwyn and him was ſupported in ſo lively a manner that I ſhould have been much entertained, had my mind been more at eaſe: but alas! I could think of nothing but the capricious, the unmeaning appearance which the alteration in my conduct muſt make in the eyes of Lord Orville? And, much as I wiſh to avoid him, greatly as I deſire to ſave myſelf from having my weakneſs known to him,—yet I cannot endure to incur his ill opinion,—and, unacquainted as he

he is with the reasons by which I am actuated, how can he fail contemning a change to him so unaccountable?

As we entered the garden, he was the first object we saw. He advanced to meet us, and I could not help observing, that at sight of each other both he and Sir Clement changed colour.

We went into the parlour, where we found the same party we had left. Mrs. Selwyn presented Sir Clement to Mrs. Beaumont; Lady Louisa and Lord Merton he seemed well acquainted with already.

The conversation was upon the general subjects, of the weather, the company at the Wells, and the news of the day. But Sir Clement, drawing his chair next to mine, took every opportunity of addressing himself to me in particular.

I could not but remark the striking difference of *his* attention, and that of Lord Orville: the latter has such gentleness of manners, such delicacy of conduct, and an air so respectful, that, when he flatters most, he never distresses, and when he most confers honour, appears to receive it! The former *obtrudes* his attention, and *forces* mine; it is so pointed, that it always confuses me, and so public, that it attracts general notice. Indeed I have sometimes thought that he would rather *wish*, than dislike

like to have his partiality for me known, as he takes great care to prevent my being ſpoken to by any body but himſelf.

When, at length, he went away, Lord Orville took his ſeat, and ſaid with a half-ſmile, "Shall *I* call Sir Clement,—or will *you* call me an uſurper, for taking this place?—You make me no anſwer?—Muſt I then ſuppoſe that Sir Clement—"

"It is little worth your Lordſhip's while," ſaid I, "to ſuppoſe any thing upon ſo inſignificant an occaſion."

"Pardon me," cried he,—"to *me* nothing is inſignificant in which you are concerned."

To this I made no anſwer, neither did he ſay any thing more, till the ladies retired to dreſs; and then, when I would have followed them, he ſtopped me, ſaying, "One moment, I entreat you!"

I turned back, and he went on. "I greatly fear that I have been ſo unfortunate as to offend you; yet ſo repugnant to my very ſoul is the idea, that I know not how to ſuppoſe it poſſible I can unwittingly have done the thing in the world that, deſignedly, I would moſt wiſh to avoid."

"No, indeed, my Lord, you have not," ſaid I.

"You ſigh!" cried he, taking my hand,

hand, "would to Heaven I were the ſharer of your uneaſineſs whenceſoever it ſprings! with what earneſtneſs would I not ſtruggle to alleviate it!—Tell me, my dear Miſs Anville,—my new-adopted ſiſter, my ſweet and moſt amiable friend!—tell me, I beſeech you, if I can afford you any aſſiſtance?"

"None, none, my Lord!" cried I, withdrawing my hand, and moving towards the door.

"Is it then impoſſible I can ſerve you?—perhaps you wiſh to ſee Mr. Macartney again?"

"No, my Lord." And I held the door open.

"I am not, I own, ſorry for that. Yet, oh, Miſs Anville, there *is* a queſtion,—there is a conjecture,—I know not how to mention, becauſe I dread the reſult!—But I ſee you are in haſte;—perhaps in the evening I may have the honour of a longer converſation.—Yet one thing will you have the goodneſs to allow me to aſk?—Did you, this morning when you went to the Wells,—did you *know* who you ſhould meet there?"

"Who, my Lord?"

"I beg your pardon a thouſand times for a curioſity ſo unlicenſed,—but I will ſay no more at preſent."

He

He bowed, expecting me to go,—and then, with quick steps, but a heavy heart, I came to my own room. His question, I am sure, meant Sir Clement Willoughby; and, had I not imposed upon myself the severe task of avoiding, flying Lord Orville with all my power, I would instantly have satisfied him of my ignorance of Sir Clement's journey. And yet more did I long to say something of the assembly, since I found he depended upon my spending the evening at home.

I did not go down stairs again till the family was assembled to dinner. My dress, I saw, struck Lord Orville with astonishment; and I was myself so much ashamed of appearing whimsical and unsteady, that I could not look up.

"I understood," said Mrs. Beaumont, "that Miss Anville did not go out this evening?"

"Her intention in the morning," said Mrs. Selwyn, "was to stay at home; but there is a fascinating power in an *assembly*, which, upon second thoughts, is not to be resisted."

"The assembly!" cried Lord Orville, "are you then going to the assembly?"

I made no answer; and we all took our places at table.

It was not without difficulty that I contrived

trived to give up my usual seat; but I was determined to adhere to the promise in my yesterday's letter, though I saw that Lord Orville seemed quite confounded at my visible endeavours to avoid him.

After dinner, we all went into the drawing-room together, as there were no gentlemen to detain his Lordship; and then, before I could place myself out of his way, he said, "You are then really going to the assembly?——May I ask if you shall dance?"

"I believe not,—my Lord."

"If I did not fear," continued he, "that you would be tired of the same partner at two following assemblies, I would give up my letter-writing till to-morrow, and solicit the honour of your hand."

"If I *do* dance," said I, in great confusion, "I believe I am engaged."

"Engaged!" cried he, with earnestness, "May I ask to whom?"

"To—Sir Clement Willoughby, my Lord?"

He said nothing, but looked very little pleased, and did not address himself to me any more all the afternoon. Oh, Sir!—thus situated, how comfortless were the feelings of your Evelina!

Early in the evening, with his accustomed

tomed aſſiduity, Sir Clement came to conduct us to the aſſembly. He ſoon contrived to ſeat himſelf next me, and, in a low voice, paid me ſo many compliments, that I knew not which way to look.

Lord Orville hardly ſpoke a word, and his countenance was grave and thoughtful; yet, whenever I raiſed my eyes, his, I perceived, were directed towards me, though inſtantly, upon meeting mine, he looked another way.

In a ſhort time, Sir Clement, taking from his pocket a folded paper, ſaid, almoſt in a whiſper, "Here, loveliest of women, you will ſee a faint, an unſucceſsful attempt to paint the object of all my adoration! yet, weak as are the lines for the purpoſe, I envy beyond expreſſion the happy mortal who has dared make the effort."

"I will look at them," ſaid I, "ſome other time." For, conſcious that I was obſerved by Lord Orville, I could not bear he ſhould ſee me take a written paper, ſo privately offered, from Sir Clement. But Sir Clement is an impracticable man, and I never yet ſucceeded in any attempt to fruſtrate whatever he had planned.

"No," ſaid he, ſtill in a whiſper, "you muſt take them now, while Lady Louiſa is away;" for ſhe and Mrs. Selwyn were gone up

up ſtairs to finiſh their dreſs, "as ſhe muſt by no means ſee them."

"Indeed," ſaid I, "I have no intention to ſhew them."

"But the only way," anſwered he, "to avoid ſuſpicion, is to take them in her abſence. I would have read them aloud myſelf, but that they are not proper to be ſeen by any body in this houſe, yourſelf and Mrs. Selwyn excepted."

Then again he preſented me the paper, which I now was obliged to take, as I found declining it was vain. But I was ſorry that this action ſhould be ſeen, and the whiſpering remarked, though the purport of the converſation was left to conjecture.

As I held it in my hand, Sir Clement teazed me to look at it immediately; and told me, that the reaſon he could not produce the lines publicly, was, that, among the ladies who were mentioned, and ſuppoſed to be rejected, was Lady Louiſa Larpent. I am much concerned at this circumſtance, as I cannot doubt but that it will render me more diſagreeable to her than ever, if ſhe ſhould hear of it.

I will now copy the verſes, which Sir Clement would not let me reſt till I had read.

SEE laſt advance, with baſhful grace,
Downcaſt eye, and bluſhing cheek,
Timid air, and beauteous face,
Anville,—whom the Graces ſeek.

Though ev'ry beauty is her own,
And though her mind each virtue fills,
Anville,—to her power unknown,
Artleſs ſtrikes,—unconſcious kills!

I am ſure, my dear Sir, you will not wonder that a panegyric ſuch as this, ſhould, in reading, give me the greateſt confuſion; and, unfortunately, before I had finiſhed it, the ladies returned.

"What have you there, my dear?" ſaid Mrs. Selwyn.

"Nothing, Ma'am," ſaid I, haſtily folding, and putting it in my pocket.

"And has *nothing*," cried ſhe, "the power of *rouge?*"

I made no anſwer; a deep ſigh which eſcaped Lord Orville at that moment, reached my ears, and gave me ſenſations—which I dare not mention!

Lord Merton then handed Lady Louiſa and Mrs. Beaumont to the latter's carriage. Mrs. Selwyn led the way to Sir Clement's, who handed me in after her.

During the ride, I did not once ſpeak; but when I came to the aſſembly-room, Sir Clement took care that I ſhould not

preſerve my ſilence. He aſked me immediately to dance; I begged him to excuſe me, and ſeek ſome other partner. But on the contrary, he told me he was very glad I would ſit ſtill, as he had a million of things to ſay to me.

He then began to tell me how much he had ſuffered from abſence; how greatly he was alarmed when he heard I had left town, and how cruelly difficult he had found it to trace me; which, at laſt, he could only do by ſacrificing another week to Captain Mirvan.

"And Howard Grove," continued he, "which, at my firſt viſit, I thought the moſt delightful ſpot upon earth, now appeared to be the moſt diſmal: the face of the country ſeemed altered: the walks which I had thought moſt pleaſant, were now moſt ſtupid: Lady Howard, who had appeared a chearful and reſpectable old lady, now ſeemed in the common John Trot ſtyle of other aged dames: Mrs. Mirvan, whom I had eſteemed as an amiable piece of ſtill-life, now became ſo inſipid, that I could hardly keep awake in her company? the daughter too, whom I had regarded as a good-humoured, pretty ſort of girl, now ſeemed too inſignificant for notice: and as to the Captain, I had always

thought him a booby,—but now he appeared a ſavage!"

"Indeed, Sir Clement," cried I, angrily, "I will not hear you talk thus of my beſt friends."

"I beg your pardon," ſaid he, "but the contraſt of my two viſits was too ſtriking, not to be mentioned."

He then aſked what I thought of the verſes?

"Either," ſaid I, "that they are written ironically, or by ſome madman."

Such a profuſion of compliments enſued, that I was obliged to propoſe dancing, in my own defence. When we ſtood up, "I intended," ſaid he, "to have diſcovered the author by his looks; but I find you ſo much the general loadſtone of attention, that my ſuſpicions change their object every moment. Surely you muſt yourſelf have ſome knowledge who he is?"

I told him, no. Yet, my dear Sir, I muſt own to you, I have no doubt but that Mr. Macartney muſt be the author; no one elſe would ſpeak of me ſo partially; and, indeed, his poetical turn puts it, with me, beyond diſpute.

He aſked me a thouſand queſtions concerning Lord Orville; how long he had been at Briſtol?—what time I had ſpent at Clifton?

ton?—whether he rode out every morning?—whether I ever truſted myſelf in a phaeton? and a multitude of other enquiries, all tending to diſcover if I was honoured with much of his Lordſhip's attention, and all made with his uſual freedom and impetuoſity.

Fortunately, as I much wiſhed to retire early, Lady Louiſa makes a point of being among the firſt who quit the rooms, and therefore we got home in very tolerable time.

Lord Orville's reception of us was grave and cold: far from diſtinguiſhing me, as uſual, by particular civilities, Lady Louiſa herſelf could not have ſeen me enter the room with more frigid unconcern, nor have more ſcrupulouſly avoided honouring me with any notice. But chiefly I was ſtruck to ſee, that he ſuffered Sir Clement, who ſtayed ſupper, to ſit between us, without any effort to prevent him, though till then, he had ſeemed to be even tenacious of a ſeat next mine.

This little circumſtance affected me more than I can expreſs: yet I endeavoured to *rejoice* at it, ſince neglect and indifference from him may be my beſt friends.—But, alas!—ſo ſuddenly, ſo abruptly to forfeit his attention!—to loſe his friendſhip!—Oh Sir, theſe thoughts pierced my ſoul!—ſcarce could I keep my ſeat; for not all my efforts

could restrain the tears from trickling down my cheeks: however, as Lord Orville saw them not, for Sir Clement's head was constantly between us, I tried to collect my spirits, and succeeded so far as to keep my place with decency, till Sir Clement took leave: and then, not daring to trust my eyes to meet those of Lord Orville, I retired.

I have been writing ever since; for, certain that I could not sleep, I would not go to bed. Tell me, my dearest Sir, if you possibly can, tell me that you approve my change of conduct,—tell me that my altered behaviour to Lord Orville is right,—that my flying his society, and avoiding his civilities, are actions which *you* would have dictated.—Tell me this, and the sacrifices I have made will comfort me in the midst of my regret,—for never, never can I cease to regret that I have lost the friendship of Lord Orville!—Oh Sir, I have slighted, have rejected,—have thrown it away!—No matter, it was an honour I merited not to preserve, and I now see,—that my mind was unequal to sustaining it without danger.

Yet so strong is the desire you have implanted in me to act with uprightness and propriety, that, however the weakness of my heart may distress and afflict me, it will never, I humbly trust, render me wilfully culpable. The wish of doing well governs every other,

other, as far as concerns my conduct,—for am I not *your* child?—the creature of your own forming?—Yet, Oh Sir, friend, parent of my heart!—my feelings are all at war with my duties; and, while I moſt ſtruggle to acquire ſelf-approbation, my peace, my happineſs, my hopes,—are loſt!

'Tis you alone can compoſe a mind ſo cruelly agitated: you, I well know, can feel pity for the weakneſs to which you are a ſtranger; and, though you blame the affliction, ſoothe and comfort the afflicted.

LETTER XII.

Mr. Villars to Evelina.

Berry Hill, Oct. 3.

YOUR laſt communication, my deareſt child, is indeed aſtoniſhing; that an acknowledged daughter and heireſs of Sir John Belmont ſhould be at Briſtol, and ſtill my Evelina bear the name of Anville, is to me inexplicable: yet the myſtery of the letter to Lady Howard prepared me to expect ſomething extraordinary upon Sir John Belmont's return to England.

Whoever this young lady may be, it is certain ſhe now takes a place to which you

have a right indisputable. An *after-marriage* I never heard of; yet, supposing such a one to have happened, Miss Evelyn was certainly the first wife, and therefore her daughter must, at least, be entitled to the name of Belmont.

Either there are circumstances in this affair at present utterly incomprehensible, or else some strange and most atrocious fraud has been practised; which of these two is the case, it now behoves us to enquire.

My reluctance to this step, gives way to my conviction of its propriety, since the reputation of your dear and much-injured mother must now either be fully cleared from blemish, or receive its final and indelible wound.

The public appearance of a daughter of Sir John Belmont will revive the remembrance of Miss Evelyn's story in all who have heard it,—who the *mother* was, will be universally demanded,—and if any other Lady Belmont should be named,—the birth of my Evelina will receive a stigma, against which honour, truth, and innocence may appeal in vain! a stigma which will eternally blast the fair fame of her virtuous mother, and cast upon her blameless self the odium of a title, which not all her purity can rescue from established shame and dishonour!

No,

No, my dear child, no; I will not quietly suffer the ashes of your mother to be treated with ignominy! Her spotless character shall be justified to the world—her marriage shall be acknowledged, and her child shall bear the name to which she is lawfully entitled.

It is true, that Mrs. Mirvan would conduct this affair with more delicacy than Mrs. Selwyn; yet, perhaps, to save time is, of all considerations, the most important, since the longer this mystery is suffered to continue, the more difficult may be rendered its explanation. The sooner, therefore, you can set out for town, the less formidable will be your task.

Let not your timidity, my dear love, depress your spirits: I shall, indeed, tremble for you at a meeting so singular, and so affecting, yet there can be no doubt of the success of your application: I enclose a letter from your unhappy mother, written, and reserved purposely for this occasion: Mrs. Clinton, too, who attended her in her last illness, must accompany you to town.—But, without any other certificate of your birth, that which you carry in your countenance, as it could not be effected by artifice, so it cannot admit of a doubt.

And now, my Evelina, committed, at length, to the care of your real parent, receive the fervent prayers, wiſhes, and bleſſings, of him who ſo fondly adopted you!

May'ſt thou, oh child of my boſom! may'ſt thou, in this change of ſituation, experience no change of diſpoſition! but receive with humility, and ſupport with meekneſs, the elevation to which thou art riſing! May thy manners, language, and deportment, all evince that modeſt equanimity, and chearful gratitude, which not merely deſerve, but dignify proſperity! May'ſt thou, to the laſt moments of an unblemiſhed life, retain thy genuine ſimplicity, thy ſingleneſs of heart, thy guileleſs ſincerity! And may'ſt thou, ſtranger to oſtentation, and ſuperior to inſolence, with true greatneſs of ſoul, ſhine forth conſpicuous only in beneficence!

ARTHUR VILLARS.

LETTER

LETTER XIII.

[Incloſed in the preceding Letter.]

Lady Belmont to Sir John Belmont.

IN the firm hope that the moment of anguiſh which approaches will prove the period of my ſufferings, once more I addreſs myſelf to Sir John Belmont, in behalf of the child, who, if it ſurvives its mother, will hereafter be the bearer of this letter.

Yet in what terms,—oh moſt cruel of men!—can the loſt Caroline addreſs you, and not addreſs you in vain? Oh deaf to the voice of compaſſion—deaf to the ſting of truth,—deaf to every tie of honour—ſay, in what terms may the loſt Caroline addreſs you, and not addreſs you in vain?

Shall I call you by the loved, the reſpected title of huſband?—No, you diſclaim it!—the father of my infant?—No, you doom it to infamy!—the lover who reſcued me from a forced marriage?—No, you have yourſelf betrayed me!—the friend from whom I hoped ſuccour and protec-

tion?—No, you have consigned me to misery and destruction!

Oh hardened against every plea of justice, remorse, or pity! how, and in what manner, may I hope to move thee? Is there one method I have left untried? remains there one resource unessayed? No! I have exhausted all the bitterness of reproach, and drained every sluice of compassion!

Hopeless, and almost desperate, twenty times have I flung away my pen;—but the feelings of a mother, a mother agonizing for the fate of her child, again animating my courage, as often I have resumed it.

Perhaps when I am no more, when the measure of my woes is compleated, and the still, silent, unreproaching dust has received my sad remains,—then, perhaps, when accusation is no longer to be feared, nor detection to be dreaded, the voice of equity, and the cry of nature may be heard.

Listen, oh Belmont, to their dictates! reprobate not your child, though you have reprobated its mother. The evils that are past, perhaps, when too late, you may wish to recall; the young creature you have persecuted, perhaps, when too late, you may regret that you have destroyed;—you may think with horror of the deceptions you have

have practiſed, and the pangs of remorſe may follow me to the tomb:—oh Belmont, all my reſentment ſoftens into pity at the thought! what will become of thee, good Heaven, when with the eye of penitence, thou revieweſt thy paſt conduct!

Hear, then, the ſolemn, the laſt addreſs with which the unhappy Caroline will importune thee.

If, when the time of thy contrition arrives,—for arrive it muſt!—when the ſenſe of thy treachery ſhall rob thee of almoſt every other, if then thy tortured heart ſhall ſigh to expiate thy guilt,—mark the conditions upon which I leave thee my forgiveneſs.

Thou know'ſt I am thy wife!—clear, then, to the world the reputation thou haſt ſullied, and receive as thy lawful ſucceſſor the child who will preſent thee this my dying requeſt!

The worthieſt, the moſt benevolent, the beſt of men, to whoſe conſoling kindneſs I owe the little tranquillity I have been able to preſerve, has plighted me his faith that, upon no other conditions, he will part with his helpleſs charge.

Should'ſt thou, in the features of this deſerted innocent, trace the reſemblance of the wretched Caroline,—ſhould its face bear the marks of its birth, and revive in thy memory

memory the image of its mother, wilt thou not, Belmont, wilt thou not therefore renounce it?—Oh babe of my fondeſt affection! for whom already I experience all the tenderneſs of maternal pity!—look not like thy unfortunate mother,—leſt the parent whom the hand of death may ſpare, ſhall be ſnatched from thee by the more cruel means of unnatural antipathy!

I can write no more. The ſmall ſhare of ſerenity I have painfully acquired, will not bear the ſhock of the dreadful ideas that crowd upon me.

Adieu,—for ever!—

Yet oh!—ſhall I not, in this laſt farewell, which thou wilt not read till every ſtormy paſſion is extinct,—and the kind grave has emboſomed all my ſorrows,—ſhall I not offer to the man once ſo dear to me, a ray of conſolation to thoſe afflictions he has in reſerve? Suffer me, then, to tell thee, that my pity far exceeds my indignation,—that I will pray for thee in my laſt moments,—and that the recollection of the love I once bore thee, ſhall ſwallow up every other!

Once more, adieu!

CAROLINE BELMONT.

LETTER

LETTER XIV.

Evelina to the Rev. Mr. Villars.

Clifton, Oct. 3d.

THIS morning I saw from my window, that Lord Orville was walking in the garden; but I would not go down stairs till breakfast was ready: and then, he paid me his compliments almost as coldly as Lady Louisa paid her's.

I took my usual place, and Mrs. Beaumont, Lady Louisa, and Mrs. Selwyn, entered into their usual conversation.—Not so your Evelina: disregarded, silent, and melancholy, she sat like a cypher, whom to nobody belonging, by nobody was noticed.

Ill brooking such a situation, and unable to support the neglect of Lord Orville, the moment breakfast was over, I left the room; and was going up stairs, when, very unpleasantly, I was stopped by Sir Clement Willoughby, who, flying into the hall, prevented my proceeding.

He enquired very particularly after my health, and entreated me to return into the parlour. Unwillingly I consented, but thought any thing preferable to continuing alone

alone with him; and he would neither leave me, nor ſuffer me to paſs on. Yet, in returning, I felt not a little aſhamed of appearing thus to take the viſit of Sir Clement to myſelf. And, indeed, he endeavoured, by his manner of addreſſing me, to give it that air.

He ſtayed, I believe, an hour; nor would he, perhaps, even then have gone, had not Mrs. Beaumont broken up the party, by propoſing an airing in her coach. Lady Louiſa conſented to accompany her: but Mrs. Selwyn, when applied to, ſaid, "If my Lord, or Sir Clement, will join us, I ſhall be happy to make one;—but really a trio of females will be nervous to the laſt degree."

Sir Clement readily agreed to attend them; indeed, he makes it his evident ſtudy to court the favour of Mrs. Beaumont. Lord Orville excuſed himſelf from going out; and I retired to my own room. What he did with himſelf I know not, for I would not go down ſtairs till dinner was ready: his coldneſs, though my own change of behaviour has occaſioned it, ſo cruelly depreſſes my ſpirits, that I know not how to ſupport myſelf in his preſence.

At dinner, I found Sir Clement again of the party. Indeed he manages every thing his own way; for Mrs. Beaumont,

though by no means eaſy to pleaſe, ſeems quite at his diſpoſal.

The dinner, the afternoon, and the evening, were to me the moſt irkſome imaginable: I was tormented by the aſſiduity of Sir Clement, who not only *took*, but *made* opportunities of ſpeaking to me,—and I was hurt,—oh how inexpreſſibly hurt!—that Lord Orville not only forbore, as hitherto, *ſeeking*, he even *neglected* all occaſions of talking with me!

I begin to think, my dear Sir, that the ſudden alteration in my behaviour was ill-judged and improper; for, as I had received no offence, as the cauſe of the change was upon *my* account, not *his*, I ſhould not have aſſumed, ſo abruptly, a reſerve for which I dared aſſign no reaſon,—nor have ſhunned his preſence ſo obviouſly, without conſidering the ſtrange appearance of ſuch a conduct.

Alas, my deareſt Sir, that my reflections ſhould always be too late to ſerve me! dearly, indeed, do I purchaſe experience! and much I fear I ſhall ſuffer yet more ſeverely, from the heedleſs indiſcretion of my temper, ere I attain that prudence and conſideration, which, by foreſeeing diſtant conſequences, may rule and direct in preſent exigencies.

Yeſterday

Oct. 4th.

Yesterday morning every body rode out, except Mrs. Selwyn and myself: and we two sat for some time together in her room; but, as soon as I could, I quitted her, to saunter in the garden; for she diverts herself so unmercifully with rallying me, either upon my gravity,—or concerning Lord Orville,—that I dread having any conversation with her.

Here I believe I spent an hour by myself; when, hearing the garden-gate open, I went into an arbour at the end of a long walk, where, ruminating, very unpleasantly, upon my future prospects, I remained quietly seated but a few minutes, before I was interrupted by the appearance of Sir Clement Willoughby.

I started; and would have left the arbour, but he prevented me. Indeed I am almost certain he had heard in the house where I was, as it is not, otherwise, probable he would have strolled down the garden alone.

"Stop, stop," cried he, "loveliest and most beloved of women, stop and hear me!"

Then, making me keep my place, he sat down by me, and would have taken my hand;

hand; but I drew it back, and said I could not stay.

"Can you, then," cried he, "refuse me even the smallest gratification, though, but yesterday, I almost suffered martyrdom for the pleasure of seeing you?"

"Martyrdom! Sir Clement."

"Yes, beauteous insensible! *martyrdom*: for did I not compel myself to be immured in a carriage, the tedious length of a whole morning, with the three most fatiguing women in England?"

"Upon my word, the Ladies are extremely obliged to you."

"O," returned he, "they have, every one of them, so copious a share of their own personal esteem, that they have no right to repine at the failure of it in the world; and, indeed, they will themselves be the last to discover it."

"How little," cried I, "are those Ladies aware of such severity from *you!*"

"They are guarded," answered he, "so happily and so securely by their own conceit, that they are not aware of it from any body. Oh Miss Anville, to be torn away from *you*, in order to be shut up with *them*, —is there a human being, except your cruel self, could forbear to pity me?"

"I believe, Sir Clement, however hardly you may choose to judge of them, your situation,

ſituation, by the world in general, would rather have been envied, than pitied."

"The world in general," anſwered he, "has the ſame opinion of them that I have myſelf: Mrs. Beaumont is every where laughed at, Lady Louiſa ridiculed, and Mrs. Selwyn hated."

"Good God, Sir Clement, what cruel ſtrength of words do you uſe!"

"It is you, my angel, are to blame, ſince your perfections have rendered their faults ſo glaring. I proteſt to you, during our whole ride, I thought the carriage drawn by ſnails. The abſurd pride of Mrs. Beaumont, and the reſpect ſhe exacts, are at once inſufferable and ſtupifying; had I never before been in her company, I ſhould have concluded that this had been her firſt airing from the herald's-office,—and wiſhed her nothing worſe than that it might alſo be the laſt. I aſſure you, that but for gaining the freedom of her houſe, I would fly her as I would plague, peſtilence, and famine. Mrs. Selwyn, indeed, afforded ſome relief from this formality, but the unbounded licence of her tongue—"

"O, Sir Clement, do *you* object to that?"

"Yes, my ſweet reproacher, in a *woman*, I do; in a *woman* I think it intolerable. She has wit, I acknowledge, and more

more understanding than half her sex put together; but she keeps alive a perpetual expectation of satire, that spreads a general uneasiness among all who are in her presence; and she talks so much, that even the best things she says weary the attention. As to the little Louisa, 'tis such a pretty piece of languor, that 'tis almost cruel to speak rationally about her,—else I should say, she is a mere compound of affectation, impertinence, and airs."

"I am quite amazed," said I, "that, with such opinions, you can behave to them all with so much attention and civility."

"Civility! my angel,—why I could worship, could adore them, only to procure myself a moment of your conversation! Have you not seen me pay my court to the gross Captain Mirvan, and the virago Madame Duval? Were it possible that a creature so horrid could be formed, as to partake of the worst qualities of all these characters,—a creature who should have the haughtiness of Mrs. Beaumont, the brutality of Captain Mirvan, the self-conceit of Mrs. Selwyn, the affectation of Lady Louisa, and the vulgarity of Madame Duval,—even to such a monster as that, I would pay homage, and pour forth adulation,

tion, only to obtain one word, one look from my adored Miſs Anville!"

"Sir Clement," ſaid I, "you are greatly miſtaken if you ſuppoſe ſuch duplicity of character recommends you to my good opinion. But I muſt take this opportunity of begging you never more to talk to me in this ſtrain."

"Oh Miſs Anville, your reproofs, your coldneſs, pierce me to the ſoul! look upon me with leſs rigour, and make me what you pleaſe;—you ſhall govern and direct all my actions,—you ſhall new-form, new-model me:—I will not have even a wiſh but of your ſuggeſtion; only deign to look upon me with pity,—if not with favour!"

"Suffer me, Sir," ſaid I very gravely, "to make uſe of this occaſion to put a final concluſion to ſuch expreſſions. I entreat you never again to addreſs me in a language ſo flighty, and ſo unwelcome. You have already given me great uneaſineſs; and I muſt frankly aſſure you, that if you do not deſire to baniſh me from wherever you are, you will adopt a very different ſtyle and conduct in future."

I then roſe, and was going, but he flung himſelf at my feet to prevent me, exclaiming, in a moſt paſſionate manner, "Good God!

God! Miſs Anville, what do you ſay?—is it, can it be poſſible, that ſo unmoved, that with ſuch petrifying indifference, you can tear from me even the remoteſt hope!"

"I know not, Sir," ſaid I, endeavouring to diſengage myſelf from him, "what hope you mean, but I am ſure that I never intended to give you any."

"You diſtract me!" cried he, "I cannot endure ſuch ſcorn;—I beſeech you to have ſome moderation in your cruelty, leſt you make me deſperate:—ſay, then, that you pity me,—O faireſt inexorable! loveliеſt tyrant!—ſay, tell me, at leaſt, that you pity me!"

Juſt then, who ſhould come in ſight, as if intending to paſs by the arbour, but Lord Orville! Good Heaven, how did I ſtart! and he, the moment he ſaw me, turned pale, and was haſtily retiring;—but I called out, "Lord Orville!—Sir Clement, releaſe me,—let go my hand!"

Sir Clement, in ſome confuſion, ſuddenly roſe, but ſtill graſped my hand. Lord Orville, who had turned back, was again walking away; but, ſtill ſtruggling to diſengage myſelf, I called out, "Pray, pray, my Lord, don't go!—Sir Clement, I *inſiſt* upon your releaſing me!"

Lord Orville then, haſtily approaching us,

us, said, with great spirit, "Sir Clement, you cannot wish to detain Miss Anville by force!"

"Neither, my Lord," cried Sir Clement, proudly, "do I request the honour of you Lordship's interference."

However, he let go my hand, and I immediately ran into the house.

I was now frightened to death lest Sir Clement's mortified pride should provoke him to affront Lord Orville: I therefore ran hastily to Mrs. Selwyn, and entreated her, in a manner hardly to be understood, to walk towards the arbour. She asked no questions, for she is quick as lightning in taking a hint, but instantly hastened into the garden.

Imagine, my dear Sir, how wretched I must be till I saw her return! scarce could I restrain myself from running back: however, I checked my impatience, and waited, though in agonies, till she came.

And, now, my dear Sir, I have a conversation to write, the most interesting to me, that I ever heard. The comments and questions with which Mrs. Selwyn interrupted her account, I shall not mention; for they are such as you may very easily suppose.

Lord Orville and Sir Clement were both seated very quietly in the arbour: and Mrs.

Mrs. Selwyn, ſtanding ſtill, as ſoon as ſhe was within a few yards of them, heard Sir Clement ſay, "Your queſtion, my Lord, alarms me, and I can by no means anſwer it, unleſs you will allow me to propoſe another?"

"Undoubtedly, Sir."

"You aſk me, my Lord, what are my intentions?—I ſhould be very happy to be ſatisfied as to your Lordſhip's."

"I have never, Sir, profeſſed *any*."

Here they were both, for a few moments, ſilent; and then Sir Clement ſaid, "To what, my Lord, muſt I, then, impute your deſire of knowing mine?"

"To an unaffected intereſt in Miſs Anville's welfare."

"Such an intereſt," ſaid Sir Clement, dryly, "is, indeed, very generous: but, except in a father,—a brother,—or a lover—"

"Sir Clement," interrupted his Lordſhip, "I know your inference: and I acknowledge I have not the right of enquiry which any of thoſe three titles beſtow, and yet I confeſs the warmeſt wiſhes to ſerve her, and to ſee her happy. Will you, then, excuſe me, if I take the liberty to repeat my queſtion?"

"Yes, if your Lordſhip will excuſe my

repeating that I think it a rather extraordinary one."

"It may be so," said Lord Orville; "but this young lady seems to be peculiarly situated; she is very young, very inexperienced, yet appears to be left totally to her own direction. She does not, I believe, see the dangers to which she is exposed, and I will own to you, I feel a strong desire to point them out."

"I don't rightly understand your Lordship,—but I think you cannot mean to prejudice her against me?"

"Her sentiments of *you*, Sir, are as much unknown to me as your intentions towards *her*. Perhaps, were I acquainted with either, my officiousness might be at an end: but I presume not to ask upon what terms—"

Here he stopped; and Sir Clement said, "You know, my Lord, I am not given to despair; I am by no means such a puppy as to tell you I am upon *sure ground*, however, perseverance—"

"You are, then, determined to persevere?"

"I am, my Lord."

"Pardon me, then, Sir Clement, if I speak to you with freedom. This young lady, though she seems alone, and, in some measure,

measure, unprotected, is not entirely without friends; she has been extremely well educated, and accustomed to good company; she has a natural love of virtue, and a mind that might adorn *any* station, however exalted: is such a young lady, Sir Clement, a proper object to trifle with?—for your principles, excuse me, Sir, are well known."

"As to that, my Lord, let Miss Anville look to herself; she has an excellent understanding, and needs no counsellor."

"Her understanding is, indeed, excellent; but she is too young for suspicion, and has an artlessness of disposition that I never saw equalled."

"My Lord," cried Sir Clement, warmly, "your praises make me doubt your disinterestedness, and there exists not the man who I would so unwillingly have for a rival as yourself. But you must give me leave to say, you have greatly deceived me in regard to this affair."

"How so, Sir?" cried Lord Orville, with equal warmth.

"You were pleased, my Lord," answered Sir Clement, "upon our first conversation concerning this young lady, to speak of her in terms by no means suited to your present encomiums; you said she was a *poor, weak, ignorant girl*, and I had

great reaſon to believe you had a moſt contemptuous opinion of her."

"It is very true," ſaid Lord Orville, "that I did not, at our firſt acquaintance, do juſtice to the merit of Miſs Anville; but I knew not, then, how new ſhe was to the world; at preſent, however, I am convinced, that whatever might appear ſtrange in her behaviour, was ſimply the effect of inexperience, timidity, and a retired education, for I find her informed, ſenſible, and intelligent. She is not, indeed, like moſt modern young ladies, to be known in half an hour; her modeſt worth, and fearful excellence, require both time and encouragement to ſhew themſelves. She does not, beautiful as ſhe is, ſeize the ſoul by ſurpriſe, but, with more dangerous faſcination, ſhe ſteals it almoſt imperceptibly."

"Enough, my Lord," cried Sir Clement, "your ſolicitude for her welfare is now ſufficiently explained."

"My friendſhip and eſteem," returned Lord Orville, "I do not wiſh to diſguiſe; but aſſure yourſelf, Sir Clement, I ſhould not have troubled *you* upon this ſubject, had Miſs Anville and I ever converſed but as friends. However, ſince you do not chuſe to avow your intentions, we muſt drop the ſubject."

"My

"My intentions," cried he, "I will frankly own, are hardly known to myself. I think Miss Anville the loveliest of her sex, and, were I a *marrying man*, she, of all the women I have seen, I would fix upon for a wife: but I believe that not even the philosophy of your Lordship would recommend to me a connection of that sort, with a girl of obscure birth, whose only dowry is her beauty, and who is evidently in a state of dependency."

"Sir Clement," cried Lord Orville, with some heat, "we will discuss this point no further; we are both free-agents, and must act for ourselves."

Here Mrs. Selwyn, fearing a surprise, and finding my apprehensions of danger were groundless, retired hastily into another walk, and soon after came to give me this account.

Good Heaven, what a man is this Sir Clement! so designing, though so easy; so deliberately artful, though so flighty! Greatly, however, is he mistaken, all confident as he seems; for the girl, obscure, poor, dependent as she is, far from wishing the honour of his alliance, would not only *now*, but *always* have rejected it.

As to Lord Orville,—but I will not trust my pen to mention him,—tell me, my dear Sir, what *you* think of him?—tell me if he

is not the nobleſt of men?—and if you can either wonder at, or blame my admiration?

The idea of being ſeen by either party, immediately after ſo ſingular a converſation, was both awkward and diſtreſſing to me; but I was obliged to appear at dinner. Sir Clement, I ſaw, was abſent and uneaſy; he watched me, he watched Lord Orville, and was evidently diſturbed in his mind. Whenever he ſpoke to me, I turned from him with undiſguiſed diſdain, for I am too much irritated againſt him, to bear with his ill-meant aſſiduities any longer.

But, not once,—not a moment did I dare meet the eyes of Lord Orville! All conſciouſneſs myſelf, I dreaded his penetration, and directed mine every way—but towards his. The reſt of the day I never quitted Mrs. Selwyn.

Adieu, my dear Sir: to-morrow I expect your directions whether I am to return to Berry Hill, or once more to viſit London.

LETTER XV.

Evelina in continuation.

Oct. 6th.

AND now, my deareſt Sir, if the perturbation of my ſpirits will allow me, I will finiſh my laſt letter from Clifton Hill.

This morning, though I did not go down ſtairs early, Lord Orville was the only perſon in the parlour when I entered it. I felt no ſmall confuſion at ſeeing him alone, after having ſo long and ſucceſsfully avoided ſuch a meeting. As ſoon as the uſual compliments were over, I would have left the room, but he ſtopped me by ſaying, "If I diſturb you, Miſs Anville, I am gone."

"My Lord," ſaid I, rather embarraſſed, "I did not mean to ſtay."

"I flattered myſelf," cried he, "I ſhould have had a moment's converſation with you."

I then turned back; and he ſeemed himſelf in ſome perplexity: but after a ſhort pauſe, "You are very good," ſaid he, "to indulge my requeſt; I have, indeed, for

ſome time paſt, moſt ardently deſired an opportunity of ſpeaking to you."

Again he pauſed; but I ſaid nothing, ſo he went on.

"You allowed me, Madam, a few days ſince, you allowed me to lay claim to your friendſhip,—to intereſt myſelf in your affairs,—to call you by the affectionate title of ſiſter;—and the honour you did me, no man could have been more ſenſible of; I am ignorant, therefore, how I have been ſo unfortunate as to forfeit it:—but, at preſent, all is changed! you fly me,—your averted eye ſhuns to meet mine, and you ſedulouſly avoid my converſation."

I was extremely diſconcerted at this grave, and but too juſt accuſation, and I am ſure I muſt look very ſimple;—but I made no anſwer.

"You will not, I hope," continued he, "condemn me unheard; if there is any thing I have done,—or any thing I have neglected, tell me, I beſeech you, *what*, and it ſhall be the whole ſtudy of my thoughts how to deſerve your pardon."

"Oh my Lord," cried I, penetrated at once with ſhame and gratitude, "your too, too great politeneſs oppreſſes me!—you have done nothing,—I have never dreamt of offence;—if there is any pardon to be

aſked,

asked, it is rather for *me*, than for *you* to ask it."

"You are all sweetness and condescension!" cried he, "and I flatter myself you will again allow me to claim those titles which I find myself so unable to forego. Yet, occupied as I am with an idea which gives me the severest uneasiness, I hope you will not think me impertinent, if I still solicit, still entreat, nay implore you to tell me, to what cause your late sudden, and to me most painful, reserve was owing?

"Indeed, my Lord," said I, stammering, "I don't, — I can't, — indeed, my Lord,—"

"I am sorry to distress you," said he, "and ashamed to be so urgent,—yet I know not how to be satisfied while in ignorance,—and the *time* when the change happened, makes me apprehend—may I, Miss Anville, tell you *what* it makes me apprehend?"

"Certainly, my Lord."

"Tell me, then,—and pardon a question most essentially important to me;—Had, or had not, Sir Clement Willoughby, any share in causing your inquietude?"

"No, my Lord," answered I, with firmness, "none in the world."

"A thousand, thousand thanks!" cried he: "you have relieved me from a weight

of conjecture which I supported very painfully. But one thing more; is it, in any measure, to Sir Clement that I may attribute the alteration in your behaviour to myself, which I could not but observe, began the very day of his arrival at the Hotwells?"

"To Sir Clement, my Lord," said I, "attribute nothing. He is the last man in the world who would have any influence over my conduct."

"And will you, then, restore to me that share of confidence and favour with which you honoured me before he came?"

Just then, to my great relief,—for I knew not what to say,—Mrs. Beaumont opened the door, and in a few minutes we went to breakfast.

Lord Orville was all gaiety; never did I see him more lively or more agreeable. Very soon after, Sir Clement Willoughby called, to pay his respects, he said, to Mrs. Beaumont. I then came to my own room, where, indulging my reflections, which now soothed, and now alarmed me, I remained very quietly, till I received your most kind letter.

Oh Sir, how sweet are the prayers you offer for your Evelina! how grateful to her are the blessings you pour upon her head! —You *commit me to my real parent*,—Ah, Guardian,

Guardian, Friend, Protector of my youth, —by whom my helpless infancy was cherished, my mind formed, my very life preserved,—*you* are the Parent my heart acknowledges, and to you do I vow eternal duty, gratitude, and affection!

I look forward to the approaching interview with more fear than hope; but important as is this subject, I am just now wholly engrossed with another, which I must hasten to communicate.

I immediately acquainted Mrs. Selwyn with the purport of your letter. She was charmed to find your opinion agreed with her own, and settled that we should go to town to-morrow morning. And a chaise is actually ordered to be here by one o'clock.

She then desired me to pack up my cloaths; and said she must go, herself, to *make speeches*, and *tell lies* to Mrs. Beaumont.

When I went down stairs to dinner, Lord Orville, who was still in excellent spirits, reproached me for secluding myself so much from the company. He sat next me,—he *would* sit next me,—at table; and he might, I am sure, repeat what he once said of me before, *that he almost exhausted himself in fruitless endeavours to entertain me*;—for, indeed, I was not to be entertained: I was

totally ſpiritleſs and dejected; the idea of the approaching meeting,—and oh, Sir, the idea of the approaching parting,—gave a heavineſs to my heart, that I could neither conquer nor repreſs. I even regretted the half explanation that had paſſed, and wiſhed Lord Orville had ſupported his own reſerve, and ſuffered me to ſupport mine.

However, when, during dinner, Mrs. Beaumont ſpoke of our journey, my gravity was no longer ſingular; a cloud inſtantly overſpread the countenance of Lord Orville, and he became nearly as thoughtful and as ſilent as myſelf.

We all went together to the drawing-room. After a ſhort and unentertaining converſation, Mrs. Selwyn ſaid ſhe muſt prepare for her journey, and begged me to ſee for ſome books ſhe had left in the parlour.

And here, while I was looking for them, I was followed by Lord Orville. He ſhut the door after he came in, and approaching me with a look of great anxiety, ſaid, "Is this true, Miſs Anville, are you going?"

"I believe ſo, my Lord," ſaid I, ſtill looking for the books.

"So ſuddenly, ſo unexpectedly, muſt I loſe you?"

"No

"No great loſs, my Lord," cried I, endeavouring to ſpeak chearfully.

"Is it poſſible," ſaid he, gravely, "Miſs Anville can doubt my ſincerity?"

"I can't imagine," cried I, "what Mrs. Selwyn has done with theſe books."

"Would to Heaven," continued he, "I might flatter myſelf you would allow me to prove it!"

"I muſt run up ſtairs," cried I, greatly confuſed, "and aſk what ſhe has done with them."

"You are going, then," cried he, taking my hand, "and you give me not the ſmalleſt hope of your return!—will you not, then, my too lovely friend!—will you not, at leaſt, teach me, with fortitude like your own, to ſupport your abſence?"

"My Lord," cried I, endeavouring to diſengage my hand, "pray let me go!"

"I will;" cried he, to my inexpreſſible confuſion, dropping on one knee, "if you wiſh to leave me!"

"Oh, my Lord," exclaimed I, "riſe, I beſeech you, riſe!—ſuch a poſture to me!—ſurely your Lordſhip is not ſo cruel as to mock me!"

"Mock you!" repeated he earneſtly, "no, I revere you! I eſteem and I admire you above all human beings! you are the friend to whom my ſoul is attached as to its

its better half! you are the moſt amiable, the moſt perfect of women! and you are dearer to me than language has the power of telling!"

I attempt not to deſcribe my ſenſations at that moment; I ſcarce breathed; I doubted if I exiſted,—the blood forſook my cheeks, and my feet refuſed to ſuſtain me: Lord Orville, haſtily riſing, ſupported me to a chair, upon which I ſunk, almoſt lifeleſs.

For a few minutes, we neither of us ſpoke; and then, ſeeing me recover, Lord Orville, though in terms hardly articulate, entreated my pardon for his abruptneſs. The moment my ſtrength returned, I attempted to riſe, but he would not permit me.

I cannot write the ſcene that followed, though every word is engraven on my heart: but his proteſtations, his expreſſions, were too flattering for repetition: nor would he, in ſpite of my repeated efforts to leave him, ſuffer me to eſcape;—in ſhort, my dear Sir, I was not proof againſt his ſolicitations—and he drew from me the moſt ſacred ſecret of my heart!

I know not how long we were together, but Lord Orville was upon his knees, when the door was opened by Mrs. Selwyn!—To tell you, Sir, the ſhame with which I was

overwhelmed, would be impoſſible;—I ſnatched my hand from Lord Orville,—he, too, ſtarted and roſe, and Mrs. Selwyn, for ſome inſtants, ſtood facing us both in ſilence.

At laſt, "My Lord," ſaid ſhe, ſarcaſtically, "have you been ſo good as to help Miſs Anville to look for my books?"

"Yes, Madam," anſwered he, attempting to rally, "and I hope we ſhall ſoon be able to find them."

"Your Lordſhip is extremely kind," ſaid ſhe, dryly, "but I can by no means conſent to take up any more of your time." Then, looking on the window-ſeat, ſhe preſently found the books, and added, "Come, here are juſt three, and ſo, like the ſervants in the Drummer, this important affair may give employment to us all." She then preſented one of them to Lord Orville, another to me, and taking a third herſelf, with a moſt provoking look, ſhe left the room.

I would inſtantly have followed her; but Lord Orville, who could not help laughing, begged me to ſtay a minute, as he had many important matters to diſcuſs.

"No, indeed, my Lord, I cannot,—perhaps I have already ſtayed too long."

"Does

"Does Miſs Anville ſo ſoon repent her goodneſs?"

"I ſcarce know what I do, my Lord,—I am quite bewildered!"

"One hour's converſation," cried he, "will I hope compoſe your ſpirits, and confirm my happineſs. When, then, may I hope to ſee you alone?—ſhall you walk in the garden to-morrow before breakfaſt?"

"No, no, my Lord; you muſt not, a ſecond time, reproach me with making an *appointment*."

"Do you then," ſaid he, laughing, "reſerve that honour only for Mr. Macartney?"

"Mr. Macartney," ſaid I, "is poor, and thinks himſelf obliged to me; otherwiſe—"

"Poverty," cried he, "I will not plead; but if being *obliged* to you has any weight, who ſhall diſpute *my* title to an appointment?"

"My Lord, I can ſtay no longer,—Mrs. Selwn will loſe all patience."

"Deprive her not of the pleaſure of her *conjectures*;—but, tell me, are you under Mrs. Selwyn's care?"

"Only for the preſent, my Lord."

"Not a few are the queſtions I have to

aſk

ask Miss Anville: among them, the most important is, whether she depends wholly on herself, or whether there is any other person for whose interest I must solicit?"

"I hardly know, my Lord, I hardly know myself to whom I most belong."

"Suffer, suffer me, then," cried he, with warmth, "to hasten the time when that shall no longer admit a doubt!—when your grateful Orville may call you all his own!"

At length, but with difficulty, I broke from him. I went, however, to my own room, for I was too much agitated to follow Mrs. Selwyn. Good God, my dear Sir, what a scene! surely the meeting for which I shall prepare to-morrow, cannot so greatly affect me! To be loved by Lord Orville,—to be the honoured choice of his noble heart,—my happiness seemed too infinite to be borne, and I wept, even bitterly I wept, from the excess of joy which overpowered me.

In this state of almost painful felicity, I continued, till I was summoned to tea. When I re-entered the drawing-room, I rejoiced much to find it full of company, as the confusion with which I met Lord Orville was rendered the less observable.

Immediately after tea, most of the company

pany played at cards,—and then,—and till supper-time, Lord Orville devoted himself wholly to me.

He saw that my eyes were red, and would not let me rest till he had made me confess the cause; and when, though most reluctantly, I had acknowledged my weakness, I could with difficulty refrain from weeping again at the gratitude he expressed.

He earnestly desired to know if my journey could not be postponed; and when I said no, entreated permission to attend me to town.

"Oh, my Lord," cried I, "what a request!"

"The sooner," answered he, "I make my devotion to you public, the sooner I may expect, from your delicacy, you will convince the world you encourage no mere *danglers*."

"You teach me, then, my Lord, the inference I might expect, if I complied."

"And can you wonder I should seek to hasten the happy time, when no scruples, no discretion will demand our separation? and when the most punctilious delicacy will rather promote, than oppose, my happiness in attending you?"

To this I was silent, and he re-urged his request.

"My Lord," said I, "you ask what I have

have no power to grant. This journey will deprive me of all right to act for myself."

"What does Miss Anville mean?"

"I cannot now explain myself; indeed, if I could, the task would be both painful and tedious."

"O Miss Anville," cried he, "when may I hope to date the period of this mystery? when flatter myself that my promised friend will indeed honour me with her confidence?"

"My Lord," said I, "I mean not to affect any mystery,—but my affairs are so circumstanced, that a long and most unhappy story, can alone explain them. However, if a short suspense will give your Lordship any uneasiness,—"

"My beloved Miss Anville," cried he, eagerly, "pardon my impatience!—You shall tell me nothing you would wish to conceal,—I will wait your own time for information, and trust to your goodness for its speed."

"There is *nothing*, my Lord, I wish to conceal,—to *postpone* an explanation is all I desire."

He then requested, that, since I would not allow him to accompany me to town, I would permit him to write to me, and promise to answer his letters.

A sudden

A ſudden recollection of the two letters which had already paſſed between us occurring to me, I haſtily anſwered, "No indeed, my Lord!—"

"I am extremely ſorry," ſaid he, gravely, "that you think me too preſumptuous. I muſt own I had flattered myſelf, that to ſoften the inquietude of an abſence which ſeems attended by ſo many inexplicable circumſtances, would not have been to incur your diſpleaſure."

This ſerioufneſs hurt me; and I could not forbear ſaying, "Can you indeed deſire, my Lord, that I ſhould, a ſecond time, expoſe myſelf, by an unguarded readineſs to write to you?"

"A *ſecond time! unguarded readineſs!*" repeated he; "you amaze me!"

"Has your Lordſhip then quite forgot the fooliſh letter I was ſo imprudent as to ſend you when in town?"

"I have not the leaſt idea," cried he, "of what you mean."

"Why then, my Lord," ſaid I, "we had better let the ſubject drop."

"Impoſſible!" cried he, "I cannot reſt without an explanation!"

And then, he obliged me to ſpeak very openly of both the letters; but, my dear Sir, imagine my ſurpriſe, when he aſſured me, in the moſt ſolemn manner, that far

from

from having ever written me a single line, he had never received, seen, or heard of my letter!

This subject, which caused mutual astonishment and perplexity to us both, entirely engrossed us for the rest of the evening; and he made me promise to shew him the letter I had received in his name to-morrow morning, that he might endeavour to discover the author.

After supper, the conversation became general.

And now, my dearest Sir, may I not call for your congratulations upon the events of this day? a day never to be recollected by me but with the most grateful joy! I know how much you are inclined to think well of Lord Orville, I cannot, therefore, apprehend that my frankness to him will displease you. Perhaps the time is not very distant when your Evelina's choice may receive the sanction of her best friend's judgment and approbation,—which seems now all she has to wish!

In regard to the change in my situation which must first take place, surely I cannot be blamed for what has passed! the partiality of Lord Orville must not only reflect honour upon me, but upon all to whom I do, or may belong.

Adieu,

Adieu, moſt dear Sir. I will write again when I arrive at London.

LETTER XVI.

Evelina in continuation.

Clifton, Oct. 7th.

YOU will ſee, my dear Sir, that I was miſtaken in ſuppoſing I ſhould write no more from this place, where my reſidence, now, ſeems more uncertain than ever.

This morning, during breakfaſt, Lord Orville took an opportunity to beg me, in a low voice, to allow him a moment's converſation before I left Clifton; "May I hope," added he, "that you will ſtrole into the garden after breakfaſt?"

I made no anſwer, but I believe my looks gave no denial; for, indeed, I much wiſhed to be ſatisfied concerning the letter. The moment, therefore, that I could quit the parlour, I ran up ſtairs for my calaſh; but before I reached my room, Mrs. Selwyn called after me, "If you are going to walk, Miſs Anville, be ſo good as to bid Jenny bring down my hat, and I'll accompany you."

Very

Very much disconcerted, I turned into the drawing-room, without making any answer, and there I hoped to wait unseen, till she had otherwise disposed of herself. But, in a few minutes, the door opened, and Sir Clement Willoughby entered.

Starting at the sight of him, in rising hastily, I let drop the letter which I had brought for Lord Orville's inspection, and, before I could recover it, Sir Clement, springing forward, had it in his hand. He was just presenting it to me, and, at the same time, enquiring after my health, when the signature caught his eye, and he read aloud "Orville."

I endeavoured, eagerly, to snatch it from him, but he would not permit me, and, holding it fast, in a passionate manner exclaimed, "Good God, Miss Anville, is it possible you can value such a letter as this?"

The question surprised and confounded me, and I was too much ashamed to answer him; but finding he made an attempt to secure it, I prevented him, and vehemently demanded him to return it.

"Tell me first," said he, holding it above my reach, "tell me if you have, since, received any more letters from the same person?"

"No, indeed," cried I, "never!"

"And

"And will you, alſo, ſweeteſt of women, promiſe that you never *will* receive any more? Say that, and you will make me the happieſt of men."

"Sir Clement," cried I, greatly confuſed, "pray give me the letter."

"And will you not firſt ſatisfy my doubts?—will you not relieve me from the torture of the moſt diſtracting ſuſpenſe?—tell me but that the deteſted Orville has written to you no more!"

"Sir Clement," cried I, angrily, "you have no right to make any conditions,—ſo pray give me the letter directly."

"Why ſuch ſolicitude about this hateful letter? can it poſſibly deſerve your eagerneſs? tell me, with truth, with ſincerity tell me; Does it really merit the leaſt anxiety?"

"No matter, Sir," cried I, in great perplexity, "the letter is mine, and therefore—"

"I muſt conclude, then," ſaid he, "that the letter deſerves your utmoſt contempt,—but that the name of Orville is ſufficient to make you prize it."

"Sir Clement," cried I, colouring, "you are quite—you are very much—the letter is not—"

"O Miſs Anville," cried he, "you bluſh!

bluſh!—you ſtammer!—Great Heaven! it is then all as I feared!

"I know not," cried I, half frightened, "what you mean; but I beſeech you to give me the letter, and to compoſe yourſelf."

"The letter," cried he, gnaſhing his teeth, "you ſhall never ſee more! You ought to have burnt it the moment you had read it!" And in an inſtant, he tore it into a thouſand pieces.

Alarmed at a fury ſo indecently outrageous, I would have run out of the room; but he caught hold of my gown, and cried, "Not yet, not yet muſt you go! I am but half-mad yet, and you muſt ſtay to finiſh your work. Tell me, therefore, does Orville know your fatal partiality?—Say *yes*," added he, trembling with paſſion, "and I will fly you for ever!"

"For Heaven's ſake, Sir Clement," cried I, "releaſe me!—if you do not, you will force me to call for help."

"Call then," cried he, "inexorable and moſt unfeeling girl; call, if you pleaſe, and bid all the world witneſs your triumph;—but could ten worlds obey your call, I would not part from you till you had anſwered me. Tell me, then, does Orville know you love him?"

At any other time, an enquiry ſo groſs

would have given me inexpreſſible confuſion; but now, the wildneſs of his manner terrified me, and I only ſaid, "Whatever you wiſh to know, Sir Clement, I will tell you another time; but for the preſent, I entreat you to let me go!"

"Enough," cried he, "I underſtand you!—the art of Orville has prevailed;—cold, inanimate, phlegmatic as he is, you have rendered him the moſt envied of men!—One thing more, and I have done:—Will he marry you?"

What a queſtion! my cheeks glowed with indignation, and I felt too proud to make any anſwer.

"I ſee, I ſee how it is," cried he, after a ſhort pauſe, "and I find I am undone for ever!" Then, letting looſe my gown, he put his hand to his forehead, and walked up and down the room in a haſty and agitated manner.

Though now at liberty to go, I had not the courage to leave him: for his evident diſtreſs excited all my compaſſion. And this was our ſituation, when Lady Louiſa, Mr. Coverley, and Mrs. Beaumont entered the room.

"Sir Clement Willoughby," ſaid the latter, "I beg pardon for making you wait ſo long, but—"

She had not time for another word; Sir Clement,

Clement, too much disordered to know or care what he did, snatched up his hat, and, brushing hastily past her, flew down stairs, and out of the house.

And with him went my sincerest pity, though I earnestly hope I shall see him no more. But what, my dear Sir, am I to conclude from his strange speeches concerning the letter? does it not seem as if he was himself the author of it? How else should he be so well acquainted with the contempt it merits? Neither do I know another human being who could serve any interest by such a deception. I remember, too, that just as I had given my own letter to the maid, Sir Clement came into the shop; probably he prevailed upon her, by some bribery, to give it to him, and afterwards, by the same means, to deliver to me an answer of his own writing. Indeed I can in no other manner account for this affair. Oh, Sir Clement, were you not yourself unhappy, I know not how I could pardon an artifice that has caused me so much uneasiness!

His abrupt departure occasioned a kind of general consternation.

"Very extraordinary behaviour this!" cried Mrs. Beaumont.

"Egad," said Mr. Coverley, "the Ba-

ronet has a mind to tip us a touch of the heroicks this morning!"

"I declare," cried Lady Louisa, "I never saw any thing so monstrous in my life! it's quite abominable,—I fancy the man's mad;—I'm sure he has given me a shocking fright!"

Soon after, Mrs. Selwyn came up stairs, with Lord Merton. The former, advancing hastily to me, said, "Miss Anville, have you an almanack?"

"Me!—no, Madam."

"Who has one, then?"

"Egad," cried Mr. Coverley, "I never bought one in my life; it would make me quite melancholy to have such a time-keeper in my pocket. I would as soon walk all day before an hour-glass."

"You are in the right," said Mrs. Selwyn, not to *watch time*, lest you should be betrayed, unawares, into reflecting how you employ it."

"Egad, Ma'am," cried he, "if Time thought no more of me, than I do of Time, I believe I should bid defiance, for one while, to old age and wrinkles,—for deuce take me if ever I think about it at all."

"Pray, Mr. Coverley," said Mrs. Selwyn, "why do you think it necessary to tell me this so often?"

"Often!" repeated he, "Egad, Madam,

dam, I don't know why I said it now,—but I'm sure I can't recollect that ever I owned as much before."

"Owned it before!" cried she, "why, my dear Sir, you own it all day long; for every word, every look, every action proclaims it."

I know not if he understood the full severity of her satire, but he only turned off with a laugh: and she then applied to Mr. Lovel, and asked if *he* had an almanack?

Mr. Lovel, who always looks alarmed when she addresses him, with some hesitation answered, I assure you, Ma'am, I have no manner of antipathy to an almanack,—none in the least,—I assure you;—I dare say I have four or five."

"Four or five!—pray may I ask what use you make of so many?"

"Use!—really, Ma'am, as to that,—I don't make any particular use of them,—but one must have them, to tell one the day of the month,—I'm sure, else, I should never keep it in my head."

"And does your time pass so smoothly unmarked, that, without an almanack, you could not distinguish one day from another?"

"Really, Ma'am," cried he, colouring, "I don't see any thing so very particular in having a few almanacks; other people have them, I believe, as well as me."

"Don't be offended," cried she, "I have but made a little digression. All I want to know, is the state of the moon,—for if it is at the *full* I shall be saved a world of conjectures, and know at once to what cause to attribute the inconsistencies I have witnessed this morning. In the first place, I heard Lord Orville excuse himself from going out, because he had business of importance to transact at home,—yet have I seen him sauntering alone in the garden this half-hour. Miss Anville, on the other hand, I invited to walk out with me; and, after seeking her every where round the house, I find her quietly seated in the drawing-room. And but a few minutes since, Sir Clement Willoughby, with even more than his usual politeness, told me he was come to spend the morning here,—when, just now, I met him flying down stairs, as if pursued by the Furies; and, far from repeating his compliments, or making any excuse, he did not even answer a question I asked him, but rushed past me, with the rapidity of a thief from a bailiff!"

"I protest," said Mrs. Beaumont, "I can't think what he meant; such rudeness from a man of any family is quite incomprehensible."

"My Lord," cried Lady Louisa to Lord Merton, "Do you know he did the same

ſame by *me?*—I was juſt going to aſk him what was the matter, but he ran paſt me ſo quick, that I declare he quite dazzled my eyes. You can't think, my Lord, how he frighted me; I dare ſay I look as pale—don't I look very pale, my Lord?"

"Your Ladyſhip," ſaid Mr. Lovel, "ſo well becomes the lilies, that the roſes might bluſh to ſee themſelves ſo excelled."

"Pray, Mr. Lovel," ſaid Mrs. Selwyn, "if the roſes ſhould bluſh, how would you find it out?"

"Egad," cried Mr. Coverley, "I ſuppoſe they muſt bluſh, as the ſaying is, like a blue dog,—for they are *red* already."

"Prithee, Jack," ſaid Lord Merton, "don't you pretend to talk about bluſhes, that never knew what they were in your life."

"My Lord," ſaid Mrs. Selwyn, "if experience alone can juſtify mentioning them, what an admirable treatiſe upon the ſubject may we not expect from your Lordſhip!"

"O, pray, Ma'am," anſwered he, "ſtick to Jack Coverley,—he's your only man; for my part, I confeſs I have a mortal averſion to arguments."

"O fie, my Lord," cried Mrs. Selwyn, "a ſenator of the nation! a member of

the noblest parliament in the world!—and yet neglect the art of oratory?"

"Why, faith, my Lord," said Mr. Lovel, "I think, in general, your House is not much addicted to study; we of the lower House have indubitably most application; and, if I did not speak before a superior power," bowing low to Lord Merton, "I should presume to add, we have likewise the most able speakers."

"Mr. Lovel," said Mrs. Selwyn, "you deserve immortality for that discovery! But for this observation, and the confession of Lord Merton, I protest I should have supposed that a peer of the realm, and an able logician, were synonymous terms."

Lord Merton, turning upon his heel, asked Lady Louisa if she should *take the air* before dinner?

"Really," answered she, "I don't know;—I'm afraid it's monstrous hot; besides," (putting her hand to her forehead) "I a'n't half well; it's quite horrid to have such weak nerves!—the least thing in the world discomposes me: I declare, that man's oddness has given me such a shock,—I don't know when I shall recover from it. But I'm a sad weak creature,—don't you think I am, my Lord?"

"O, by no means," answered he, "your Ladyship is merely delicate,—and devil take

take me if ever I had the leaſt paſſion for an Amazon."

"I have the honour to be quite of your Lordſhip's opinion," ſaid Mr. Lovel, looking malicioufly at Mrs. Selwyn, "for I have an inſuperable averſion to ſtrength, either of body or mind, in a female."

"Faith, and ſo have I," ſaid Mr. Coverley; "for egad I'd as ſoon ſee a woman chop wood, as hear her chop logic."

"So would every man in his ſenſes," ſaid Lord Merton; "for a woman wants nothing to recommend her but beauty and good-nature; in every thing elſe ſhe is either impertinent or unnatural. For my part, deuce take me if ever I wiſh to hear a word of ſenſe from a woman as long as I live!"

"It has always been agreed," ſaid Mrs. Selwyn, looking round her with the utmoſt contempt, "that no man ought to be connected with a woman whoſe underſtanding is ſuperior to his own. Now I very much fear, that to accommodate all this good company, according to ſuch a rule, would be utterly impracticable, unleſs we ſhould chuſe ſubjects from Swift's hoſpital of idiots."

How many enemies, my dear Sir, does this unbounded ſeverity excite! Lord Merton, however, only whiſtled; Mr. Coverley

ley ſang; and Mr. Lovel, after biting his lips ſome time, ſaid, "'Pon honour, that lady—if ſhe was *not* a lady,—I ſhould be half tempted to obſerve,—that there is ſomething,—in ſuch ſeverity,—that is rather, I muſt ſay,—rather—*oddiſh*."

Juſt then, a ſervant brought Lady Louiſa a note, upon a *waiter*, which is a ceremony always uſed to her Ladyſhip; and I took the opportunity of this interruption to the converſation, to ſteal out of the room.

I went immediately to the parlour, which I found quite empty; for I did not dare walk in the garden after what Mrs. Selwyn had ſaid.

In a few minutes, a ſervant announced Mr. Macartney, ſaying, as he entered the room, that he would acquaint Lord Orville he was there.

Mr. Macartney rejoiced much at finding me alone. He told me he had taken the liberty to enquire for Lord Orville, by way of pretext for coming to the houſe.

I then very eagerly enquired if he had ſeen his father.

"I have, Madam," ſaid he; "and the generous compaſſion you have ſhewn made me haſten to acquaint you, that upon reading my unhappy mother's letter, he did not heſitate to acknowledge me."

"Good God," cried I, with no little

emotion, "how similar are our circumstances! And did he receive you kindly?"

"I could not, Madam, expect that he would: the cruel transaction which obliged me to fly Paris, was too recent in his memory."

"And,—have you seen the young lady?"

"No, Madam," said he mournfully, "I was forbid her sight."

"Forbid her sight!—and why?"

"Partly, perhaps, from prudence,—and partly from the remains of a resentment which will not easily subside. I only requested leave to acquaint her with my relationship, and be allowed to call her sister;—but it was denied me!—*You have no sister*, said Sir John, *you must forget her existence.* Hard, and vain command!"

"You have, you have a sister!" cried I, from an impulse of pity, which I could not repress, "a sister who is most warmly interested in your welfare, and who only wants opportunity to manifest her friendship and regard."

"Gracious Heaven!" cried he, "what does Miss Anville mean?"

"Anville," said I, "is not my real name; Sir John Belmont is my father,—he is your's,—and I am your sister!—You see, therefore, the claim we mutually have

to each other's regard; we are not merely bound by the ties of friendſhip, but by thoſe of blood. I feel for you, already, all the affection of a ſiſter,—I felt it, indeed, before I knew I was one.—Why, my dear brother, do you not ſpeak?—do you heſitate to acknowledge me?"

"I am ſo loſt in aſtoniſhment," cried he, "that I know not if I hear right!"—

"I have then found a brother," cried I, holding out my hand, "and he will not own me!"

"Own you!—Oh, Madam," cried he, accepting my offered hand, "is it, indeed, poſſible *you* can own *me?*—a poor, wretched adventurer! who ſo lately had no ſupport but from your generoſity?—whom your benevolence ſnatched from utter deſtruction?—Can *you*,—Oh Madam, can you indeed, and without a bluſh, condeſcend to own ſuch an outcaſt for a brother?"

"Oh, forbear, forbear," cried I, "is this language proper for a ſiſter? are we not reciprocally bound to each other?—Will you not ſuffer me to expect from *you* all the good offices in your power?—But tell me, where is our father at preſent?"

"At the Hotwell, Madam; he arrived there yeſterday morning."

I would

I would have proceeded with further queſtions, but the entrance of Lord Orville prevented me. The moment he ſaw us, he ſtarted, and would have retreated; but, drawing my hand from Mr. Macartney's, I begged him to come in.

For a few moments we were all ſilent, and, I believe, all in equal confuſion. Mr. Macartney, however, recollecting himſelf, ſaid, "I hope your Lordſhip will forgive the liberty I have taken in making uſe of your name?"

Lord Orville, rather coldly, bowed, but, ſaid nothing.

Again we were all ſilent, and then Mr. Macartney took leave.

"I fancy," ſaid Lord Orville, when he was gone, "I have ſhortened Mr. Macartney's viſit?"

"No, my Lord, not at all."

"I had preſumed," ſaid he, with ſome heſitation, "I ſhould have ſeen Miſs Anville in the garden;—but I knew not ſhe was ſo much better engaged."

Before I could anſwer, a ſervant came to tell me the chaiſe was ready, and that Mrs. Selwyn was enquiring for me.

"I will wait on her immediately," cried I, and away I was running; but Lord Orville, ſtopping me, ſaid, with great emo-

tion, "Is it thus, Miss Anville, you leave me?"

"My Lord," cried I, "how can I help it?—perhaps, soon, some better opportunity may offer—"

"Good Heaven!" cried he, "do you indeed take me for a Stoic? What better opportunity may I hope for?—is not the chaise come?—are you not going? have you even deigned to tell me whither?"

"My journey, my Lord, will now be deferred. Mr. Macartney has brought me intelligence which renders it, at present, unnecessary."

"Mr. Macartney," said he, gravely, "seems to have great influence,—yet he is a very young counsellor."

"Is it possible, my Lord, Mr. Macartney can give you the least uneasiness?"

"My dearest Miss Anville," said he, taking my hand, "I see, and I adore the purity of your mind, superior as it is to all little arts, and all apprehensions of suspicion; and I should do myself, as well as you, injustice, if I were capable of harbouring the smallest doubts of that goodness which makes you mine for ever: nevertheless, pardon me, if I own myself surprised,—nay, alarmed, at these frequent meetings with so young a man as Mr. Macartney."

"My

"My Lord," cried I, eager to clear myself, "Mr. Macartney is my brother!"

"Your brother! you amaze me!—What ſtrange myſtery, then, makes his relationſhip a ſecret?"

Juſt then, Mrs. Selwyn opened the door. "O, you are here!" cried ſhe; "Pray is my Lord ſo kind as to aſſiſt you in *preparing* for your journey,—or in *retarding* it?"

"I ſhould be moſt happy," ſaid Lord Orville, ſmiling, "if it were in my power to do the *latter*."

I then acquainted her with Mr. Macartney's communication.

She immediately ordered the chaiſe away, and then took me into her own room, to conſider what ſhould be done.

A few minutes ſufficed to determine her, and ſhe wrote the following note.

To Sir John Belmont, Bart.

MRS. Selwyn preſents her compliments to Sir John Belmont, and, if he is at leiſure, will be glad to wait on him this morning, upon buſineſs of importance.

She

She then ordered her man to enquire at the pump-room for a direction; and went herself to Mrs. Beaumont to apologise for deferring her journey.

An answer was presently returned, that he would be glad to see her.

She would have had me immediately accompany her to the Hotwells; but I entreated her to spare me the distress of so abrupt an introduction, and to pave the way for my reception. She consented rather reluctantly, and, attended only by her servant, walked to the Wells.

She was not absent two hours, yet so miserably did time seem to linger, that I thought a thousand accidents had happened, and feared she would never return. I passed the whole time in my own room, for I was too much agitated even to converse with Lord Orville.

The instant that, from my window, I saw her returning, I flew down stairs, and met her in the garden.

We both walked to the arbour.

Her looks, in which disappointment and anger were expressed, presently announced to me the failure of her embassy. Finding that she did not speak, I asked her, in a faultering voice, Whether or not I had a father?

"You

"You have *not*, my dear!" said she, abruptly.

"Very well, Madam," said I, with tolerable calmness, "let the chaise, then, be ordered again,—I will go to Berry Hill,—and there, I trust, I shall still find one!"

It was some time ere she could give, or I could hear, the account of her visit; and then she related it in a hasty manner; yet I believe I can recollect every word.

"I found Sir John alone. He received me with the utmost politeness. I did not keep him a moment in suspense as to the purport of my visit. But I had no sooner made it known, than, with a supercilious smile, he said, "And have you, Madam, been prevailed upon to revive that ridiculous old story?" Ridiculous, I told him, was a term which he would find no one else do him the favour to make use of, in speaking of the horrible actions belonging to the *old story* he made so light of; "actions," continued I, "which would dye still deeper the black annals of Nero or Caligula." He attempted in vain to rally, for I pursued him with all the severity in my power, and ceased not painting the enormity of his crime, till I stung him to the quick, and in a voice of passion and impatience, he said, "No more, Madam,—this is not a subject upon which I need a monitor."

"Make,

"Make, then," cried I, "the only reparation in your power.—Your daughter is now at Clifton; send for her hither, and, in the face of the world, proclaim the legitimacy of her birth, and clear the reputation of your injured wife." "Madam," said he, "you are much mistaken, if you suppose I waited for the honour of this visit, before I did what little justice now depends upon me, to the memory of that unfortunate woman: her daughter has been my care from her infancy; I have taken her into my house; she bears my name, and she will be my sole heiress." For some time this assertion appeared so absurd, that I only laughed at it; but at last, he assured me, I had myself been imposed upon, for that the very woman who attended Lady Belmont in her last illness, conveyed the child to him while he was in London, before she was a year old. "Unwilling," he added, "at that time to confirm the rumour of my being married, I sent the woman with the child to France; as soon as she was old enough, I put her into a convent, where she has been properly educated; and now I have taken her home. I have acknowledged her for my lawful child, and paid, at length, to the memory of her unhappy mother, a tribute of fame, which has made me wish to hide myself

hereafter

hereafter from all the world." This whole ſtory ſounded ſo improbable, that I did not ſcruple to tell him I diſcredited every word. He then rung his bell, and enquiring if his hair-dreſſer was come, ſaid he was ſorry to leave me, but that, if I would favour him with my company to-morrow, he would do himſelf the honour of introducing Miſs Belmont to *me*, inſtead of troubling me to introduce her to *him*. I roſe in great indignation, and aſſuring him I would make his conduct as public as it was infamous, I left the houſe."

Good Heaven, how ſtrange the recital! how incomprehenſible an affair! The Miſs Belmont, then, who is actually at Briſtol, paſſes for the daughter of my unhappy mother!—paſſes, in ſhort, for your Evelina! Who ſhe can be, or what this tale can mean, I have not any idea.

Mrs. Selwyn ſoon after left me to my own reflections. Indeed they were not very pleaſant. Quietly as I had borne her relation, the moment I was alone I felt moſt bitterly both the diſgrace and the ſorrow of a rejection ſo cruelly inexplicable.

I know not how long I might have continued in this ſituation, had I not been awakened from my melancholy reverie by the voice of Lord Orville. "May I come in," cried he, "or ſhall I interrupt you?"

I was

I was silent, and he seated himself next me.

"I fear," he continued, "Miss Anville will think I persecute her; yet so much as I have to say, and so much as I wish to hear, with so few opportunities for either, she cannot wonder,—and I hope she will not be offended,—that I seize with such avidity every moment in my power to converse with her. You are grave," added he, taking my hand; "I hope you do not regret the delay of your journey?—I hope the pleasure it gives to *me*, will not be a subject of pain to *you?*—You are silent!—Something, I am sure, has afflicted you:—Would to Heaven I were able to console you!—Would to Heaven I were worthy to participate in your sorrows!"

My heart was too full to bear this kindness, and I could only answer by my tears. "Good Heaven," cried he, "how you alarm me!—My love, my sweet Miss Anville, deny me no longer to be the sharer of your griefs!—tell me, at least, that you have not withdrawn your esteem!—that you do not repent the goodness you have shewn me!—that you still think me the same grateful Orville whose heart you have deigned to accept!"

"Oh, my Lord," cried I, "your generosity overpowers me!" And I wept like an

an infant. For now that all my hopes of being acknowledged seemed finally crushed, I felt the nobleness of his disinterested regard so forcibly, that I could scarce breathe under the weight of gratitude which oppressed me.

He seemed greatly shocked, and in terms the most flattering, the most respectfully tender, he at once soothed my distress, and urged me to tell him its cause.

"My Lord," said I, when I was able to speak, "you little know what an outcast you have honoured with your choice!—a child of bounty,—an orphan from infancy,—dependent, even for subsistence dependent, upon the kindness of compassion!—Rejected by my natural friends,—disowned for ever by my nearest relation,—Oh, my Lord, so circumstanced, can I deserve the distinction with which you honour me? No, no, I feel the inequality too painfully;—you must leave me, my Lord, you must suffer me to return to obscurity,—and there, in the bosom of my first, best, my only friend,—I will pour forth all the grief of my heart!—while you, my Lord, must seek elsewhere—"

I could not proceed; my whole soul recoiled against the charge I would have given, and my voice refused to utter it.

"Never!"

"Never!" cried he, warmly; "my heart is yours, and I swear to you an attachment eternal!—You prepare me, indeed, for a tale of horror, and I am almost breathless with expectation,—but so firm is my conviction, that, whatever are your misfortunes, to have merited them is not of the number, that I feel myself more strongly, more invincibly devoted to you than ever!—Tell me but where I may find this noble friend, whose virtues you have already taught me to reverence,—and I will fly to obtain his consent and intercession, that henceforward our fates may be indissolubly united,—and then shall it be the sole study of my life to endeavour to soften your past,—and guard you from future misfortunes!"

I had just raised my eyes, to answer this most generous of men, when the first object they met was Mrs. Selwyn!

"So, my dear," cried she, what, still courting the rural shades!—I thought ere now you would have been satiated with this retired seat, and I have been seeking you all over the house. But I find the only way to meet with *you*,—is to enquire for *Lord Orville*. However, don't let me disturb your meditations; you are possibly planning some pastoral dialogue."

And,

And, with this provoking ſpeech, ſhe walked on.

In the greateſt confuſion, I was quitting the arbour, when Lord Orville ſaid, "Permit *me* to follow Mrs. Selwyn,—it is time to put an end to all impertinent conjectures; will you allow me to ſpeak to her openly?"

I aſſented in ſilence, and he left me.

I then went to my own room, where I continued till I was ſummoned to dinner; after which, Mrs. Selwyn invited me to her's.

The moment ſhe had ſhut the door, "Your Ladyſhip," ſaid ſhe, "will, I hope, be ſeated."

"Ma'am!" cried I, ſtaring.

"O the ſweet innocent! So you don't know what I mean?—but, my dear, my ſole view is to accuſtom you a little to your dignity elect, leſt, when you are addreſſed by your title, you ſhould look another way, from an apprehenſion of liſtening to a diſcourſe not meant for you to hear."

Having, in this manner, diverted herſelf with my confuſion, till her raillery was almoſt exhauſted, ſhe congratulated me very ſeriouſly upon the partiality of Lord Orville, and painted to me, in the ſtrongeſt terms, his diſintereſted deſire of being married to me immediately. She had told him,

him, she said, my whole story; and yet he was willing, nay eager, that our union should take place of any further application to my family. "Now, my dear," continued she, "I advise you by all means to marry him directly; nothing can be more precarious than our success with Sir John; and the young men of this age are not to be trusted with too much time for deliberation, where their interests are concerned."

"Good God, Madam," cried I, "do you think I would *hurry* Lord Orville?"

"Well, do as you will," said she; "luckily you have an excellent subject for Quixotism;—otherwise, this delay might prove your ruin: but Lord Orville is almost as romantic as if he had been born and bred at Berry Hill."

She then proposed, as no better expedient seemed likely to be suggested, that I should accompany her at once in her visit to the Hotwells to-morrow morning.

The very idea made me tremble; yet she represented so strongly the necessity of pursuing this unhappy affair with spirit, or giving it totally up, that, wanting her force of argument, I was almost obliged to yield to her proposal.

In the evening, we all walked in the garden: and Lord Orville, who never quitted

quitted my side, told me he had been listening to a tale, which, though it had removed the perplexities that had so long tormented him, had penetrated him with sorrow and compassion. I acquainted him with Mrs. Selwyn's plan for to-morrow, and confessed the extreme terror it gave me. He then, in a manner almost unanswerable, besought me to leave to him the conduct of the affair, by consenting to be his before an interview took place.

I could not but acknowledge my sense of his generosity; but I told him I was wholly dependent upon you, and that I was certain your opinion would be the same as mine, which was, that it would be highly improper I should dispose of myself for ever, so very near the time which must finally decide by whose authority I ought to be guided. The subject of this dreaded meeting, with the thousand conjectures and apprehensions to which it gives birth, employed all our conversation then, as it has all my thoughts since.

Heaven only knows how I shall support myself, when the long-expected,—the wished,—yet terrible moment arrives, that will prostrate me at the feet of the nearest, the most reverenced of all relations, whom my heart yearns to know, and longs to love!

LETTER XVII.

Evelina in continuation.

Oct. 9th.

I Could not write yesterday, so violent was the agitation of my mind,—but I will not, now, lose a moment till I have hastened to my best friend an account of the transactions of a day I can never recollect without emotion.

Mrs. Selwyn determined upon sending no message, "Lest," said she, "Sir John, fatigued with the very idea of my reproaches, should endeavour to avoid a meeting: all we have to do, is to take him by surprise. He cannot but see who you are, whether he will do you justice or not."

We went early, and in Mrs. Beaumont's chariot; into which, Lord Orville, uttering words of the kindest encouragement, handed us both.

My uneasiness, during the ride, was excessive, but, when we stopped at the door, I was almost senseless with terror! the meeting, at last, was not so dreadful as that moment! I believe I was carried into the house; but I scarce recollect what was done with me: however, I know we remained

mained some time in the parlour, before Mrs. Selwyn could send any message up stairs.

When I was somewhat recovered, I entreated her to let me return home, assuring her I felt myself quite unequal to supporting the interview.

"No," said she, "you must stay now; your fears will but gain strength by delay, and we must not have such a shock as this repeated." Then, turning to the servant, she sent up her name.

An answer was brought, that he was going out in great haste, but would attend her immediately. I turned so sick, that Mrs. Selwyn was apprehensive I should have fainted; and opening a door which led to an inner apartment, she begged me to wait there till I was somewhat composed, and till she had prepared for my reception.

Glad of every moment's reprieve, I willingly agreed to the proposal, and Mrs. Selwyn had but just time to shut me in, before her presence was necessary.

The voice of a *father*—Oh dear and revered name!—which then, for the first time, struck my ears, affected me in a manner I cannot describe, though it was only employed in giving orders to a servant as he came down stairs.

Then, entering the parlour, I heard him

ſay, "I am ſorry, Madam, I made you wait, but I have an engagement which now calls me away: however, if you have any commands for me, I ſhall be glad of the honour of your company ſome other time."

"I am come, Sir," ſaid Mrs. Selwyn, "to introduce your daughter to you."

"I am infinitely obliged to you," anſwered he, "but I have juſt had the ſatisfaction of breakfaſting with her. Ma'am, your moſt obedient."

"You refuſe, then, to ſee her?"

"I am much indebted to you, Madam, for this deſire of encreaſing my family, but you muſt excuſe me if I decline taking advantage of it. I have already a daughter, to whom I owe every thing; and it is not three days ſince, that I had the pleaſure of diſcovering a ſon; how many more ſons and daughters may be brought to me, I am yet to learn, but I am, already, perfectly ſatisfied with the ſize of my family."

"Had you a thouſand children, Sir John," ſaid Mrs. Selwyn, warmly, "this only one, of which Lady Belmont was the mother, ought to be moſt diſtinguiſhed; and, far from avoiding her ſight, you ſhould thank your ſtars, in humble gratitude, that there yet remains in your power the ſmalleſt opportunity of doing the injured

jured wife you have deſtroyed, the poor juſtice of acknowledging her child!"

"I am very unwilling, Madam," anſwered he, "to enter into any diſcuſſion of this point; but you are determined to compel me to ſpeak. There lives not, at this time, the human being who ſhould talk to *me* of the regret due to the memory of that ill-fated woman; no one can feel it ſo ſeverely as myſelf: but, let me, nevertheleſs, aſſure you, I have already done all that remained in my power to prove the reſpect ſhe merited from me; her child I have educated and owned for my lawful heireſs; if, Madam, you can ſuggeſt to me any other means by which I may more fully do her juſtice, and more clearly manifeſt her innocence, name them to me, and though they ſhould wound my character ſtill deeper, I will perform them readily."

"All this ſounds vaſtly well," returned Mrs. Selwyn, "but I muſt own it is rather too enigmatical for *my* faculties of comprehenſion. You can, however, have no objection to ſeeing this young lady?"

"None in the world."

"Come forth, then, my dear," cried ſhe, opening the door, "come forth, and ſee your father!" Then, taking my trembling hand, ſhe led me forward. I would have withdrawn it, and retreated, but as

he advanced instantly towards me, I found myself already before him.

What a moment for your Evelina!—an involuntary scream escaped me, and, covering my face with my hands, I sunk on the floor.

He had, however, seen me first; for in a voice scarce articulate, he exclaimed, "My God! does Caroline Evelyn still live!"

Mrs. Selwyn said something, but I could not listen to her; and, in a few minutes, he added, "Lift up thy head,—if my sight has not blasted thee,—lift up thy head, thou image of my long-lost Caroline!"

Affected beyond measure, I half arose, and embraced his knees, while yet on my own.

"Yes, yes," cried he, looking earnestly in my face, "I see, I see thou art her child! she lives—she breathes—she is present to my view!—Oh God, that she indeed lived!—Go, child, go," added he, wildly starting, and pushing me from him, "take her away, Madam,—I cannot bear to look at her!" And then, breaking hastily from me, he rushed out of the room.

Speechless, motionless myself, I attempted not to stop him: but Mrs. Selwyn, hastening after him, caught hold of his arm, "Leave me, Madam," cried he, with quickness, "and take care of the poor

child;

child;—bid her not think me unkind, tell her I would at this moment plunge a dagger in my heart to ſerve her,—but ſhe has ſet my brain on fire, and I can ſee her no more!" Then, with a violence almoſt frantic, he ran up ſtairs.

Oh Sir, had I not indeed cauſe to dread this interview?—an interview ſo unſpeakably painful and afflicting to us both! Mrs. Selwyn would have immediately returned to Cliſton; but I entreated her to wait ſome time, in the hope that my unhappy father, when his firſt emotion was over, would again bear me in his ſight. However, he ſoon after ſent his ſervant to enquire how I did, and to tell Mrs. Selwyn he was much indiſpoſed, but would hope for the honour of ſeeing her to-morrow, at any time ſhe would pleaſe to appoint.

She fixed upon ten o'clock in the morning; and then, with a heavy heart, I got into the chariot. Thoſe afflicting words, *I can ſee her no more*, were never a moment abſent from my mind.

Yet the ſight of Lord Orville, who handed us from the carriage, gave ſome relief to the ſadneſs of my thoughts. I could not, however, enter upon the painful ſubject, but begging Mrs. Selwyn to ſatisfy him, I went to my own room.

As ſoon as I communicated to the good

Mrs. Clinton the preſent ſituation of my affairs, an idea occurred to her, which ſeemed to clear up all the myſtery of my having been ſo long diſowned.

The woman, ſhe ſays, who attended my ever-to-be-regretted mother in her laſt illneſs, and who nurſed me the firſt four months of my life, ſoon after being diſcharged from your houſe, left Berry Hill entirely, with her baby, who was but ſix weeks older than myſelf. Mrs. Clinton remembers, that her quitting the place appeared, at the time, very extraordinary to the neighbours, but, as ſhe was never heard of afterwards, ſhe was, by degrees, quite forgotten.

The moment this was mentioned, it ſtruck Mrs. Selwyn, as well as Mrs. Clinton herſelf, that my father had been impoſed upon, and that the nurſe who ſaid ſhe had brought his child to him, had, in fact, carried her own.

The name by which I was known, the ſecrecy obſerved in regard to my family, and the retirement in which I lived, all conſpired to render this ſcheme, however daring and fraudulent, by no means impracticable, and, in ſhort, the idea was no ſooner ſtarted, than conviction ſeemed to follow it.

Mrs. Selwyn determined immediately to diſcover

discover the truth or mistake of this conjecture; therefore, the moment she had dined, she walked to the Hotwells, attended by Mrs. Clinton.

I waited in my room till her return, and then heard the following account of her visit:

She found my poor father in great agitation. She immediately informed him of the occasion of her so speedy return, and of her suspicions of the woman who had pretended to convey to him his child. Interrupting her with quickness, he said he had just sent her from his presence: that the certainty I carried in my countenance, of my real birth, made him, the moment he had recovered from a surprise which had almost deprived him of reason, suspect, himself, the imposition she mentioned. He had, therefore, sent for the woman, and questioned her with the utmost austerity: she turned pale, and was extremely embarrassed, but still she persisted in affirming, that she had really brought him the daughter of Lady Belmont. His perplexity, he said, almost distracted him; he had *always* observed, that his daughter bore no resemblance to either of her parents, but, as he had never doubted the veracity of the nurse, this circumstance did not give birth to any suspicion.

At Mrs. Selwyn's desire, the woman was again called, and interrogated with equal art and severity; her confusion was evident, and her answers often contradictory, yet she still declared she was no impostor. "We will see that in a minute," said Mrs. Selwyn, and then desired Mrs. Clinton might be called up stairs. The poor wretch, changing colour, would have escaped out of the room, but, being prevented, dropt on her knees, and implored forgiveness. A confession of the whole affair was then extorted from her.

Doubtless, my dear Sir, you must remember *Dame Green*, who was my first nurse. The deceit she has practised, was suggested, she says, by a conversation she overheard, in which my unhappy mother besought you, that, if her child survived her, you would take the sole care of its education; and, in particular, if it should be a female, you would by no means part with her in early life. You not only consented, she says, but assured her you would even retire abroad with me yourself, if my father should importunately demand me. Her own child, she said, was then in her arms, and she could not forbear wishing it were possible to give *her* the fortune which seemed so little valued for me. This wish once raised, was not easily suppressed; on

the contrary, what at first appeared a mere idle desire, in a short time seemed a feasible scheme. Her husband was dead, and she had little regard for any body but her child; and, in short, having saved money for the journey, she contrived to enquire a direction to my father, and telling her neighbours she was going to settle in Devonshire, she set out on her expedition.

When Mrs. Selwyn asked her, how she dared perpetrate such a fraud, she protested she had no ill designs, but that, as *Miss* would be never the worse for it, she thought it pity *nobody* should be the better.

Her success we are already acquainted with. Indeed every thing seemed to contribute towards it: my father had no correspondent at Berry Hill, the child was instantly sent to France, where being brought up in as much retirement as myself, nothing but accident could discover the fraud.

And here, let me indulge myself in observing, and rejoicing to observe, that the total neglect I thought I met with was not the effect of insensibility or unkindness, but of imposition and error; and that at the very time we concluded I was unnaturally rejected, my deluded father meant to shew me most favour and protection.

He acknowledges that Lady Howard's

letter flung him into some perplexity; he immediately communicated it to Dame Green, who confessed it was the greatest shock she had ever received in her life; yet she had the art and boldness to assert, that Lady Howard must herself have been deceived: and as she had, from the beginning of her enterprize, declared she had stolen away the child without your knowledge, he concluded that some deceit was *then* intended him; and this thought occasioned his abrupt answer.

Dame Green owned, that from the moment the journey to England was settled, she gave herself up for lost. All her hope was to have had her daughter married before it took place, for which reason she had so much promoted Mr. Macartney's addresses: for though such a match was inadequate to the pretensions of *Miss Belmont*, she well knew it was far superior to those *her daughter* could form, after the discovery of her birth.

My first enquiry was, if this innocent daughter was yet acquainted with the affair? No, Mrs. Selwyn said, nor was any plan settled how to divulge it to her. Poor unfortunate girl! how hard is her fate! She is entitled to my kindest offices, and I shall always consider her as my sister.

I then asked whether my father would again allow me to see him?

"Why no, my dear, not yet," answered she; "he declares the sight of you is too much for him: however, we are to settle every thing concerning you to-morrow, for this woman took up all our time to-day."

This morning, therefore, she is again gone to the Hotwell. I am waiting in all impatience for her return; but as I know you will be anxious for the account this letter contains, I will not delay sending it.

LETTER XVIII.

Evelina in continuation.

Oct. 9th.

HOW agitated, my dear Sir, is the present life of your Evelina! every day seems important, and one event only a prelude to another.

Mrs. Selwyn, upon her return this morning from the Hotwell, entering my room very abruptly, said, "Oh my dear, I have terrible news for you!"

"For me, Ma'am!—Good God! what now?"

"Arm yourself," cried she, "with all your

your Berry Hill philosophy;—con over every lesson of fortitude or resignation you ever learnt in your life,—for know,—you are next week to be married to Lord Orville!"

Doubt, astonishment, and a kind of perturbation I cannot describe, made this abrupt communication alarm me extremely, and, almost breathless, I could only exclaim, "Good God, Madam, what do you tell me?"

"You may well be frightened, my dear," said she, ironically, for really there is something mighty terrific, in becoming, at once, the wife of the man you adore,—and a Countess!"

I entreated her to spare her raillery, and tell me her real meaning. She could not prevail with herself to grant the *first* request, though she readily complied with the second.

My poor father, she said, was still in the utmost uneasiness. He entered upon his affairs with great openness, and told her he was equally disturbed how to dispose either of the daughter he had discovered, or the daughter he was now to give up; the former he dreaded to trust himself with again beholding, and the latter he knew not how to shock with the intelligence of her disgrace. Mrs. Selwyn then acquainted him with

with my ſituation in regard to Lord Orville; this delighted him extremely, and, when he heard of his Lordſhip's eagerneſs, he ſaid he was himſelf of opinion, the ſooner the union took place the better: and, in return, he informed her of the affair of Mr. Macartney. "And, after a very long converſation," continued Mrs. Selwyn, "we agreed, that the moſt eligible ſcheme for all parties would be to have both the real and the fictitious daughter married without delay. Therefore, if either of you have any inclination to pull caps for the title of Miſs Belmont, you muſt do it with all ſpeed, as next week will take from both of you all pretenſions to it."

"Next week!—dear Madam, what a ſtrange plan!—without my being conſulted—without applying to Mr. Villars,—without even the concurrence of Lord Orville!"

"As to conſulting *you*, my dear, it was out of all queſtion, becauſe, you know, young ladies' hearts and hands are always to be given with reluctance;—as to Mr. Villars, it is ſufficient we know him for your friend;—and as for Lord Orville, he is a party concerned."

"A party concerned!—you amaze me!"

"Why, yes; for as I found our conſultation

tation likely to redound to his advantage, I perſuaded Sir John to ſend for him."

"Send for him!—Good God!"

"Yes, and Sir John agreed. I told the ſervant, that if he could not hear of his Lordſhip in the houſe, he might be pretty certain of encountering him in the arbour. —Why do you colour, my dear?—Well, he was with us in a moment; I introduced him to Sir John, and we proceeded to buſineſs."

"I am very, very ſorry for it!—Lord Orville muſt, himſelf, think this conduct ſtrangely precipitate."

"No, my dear, you are miſtaken, Lord Orville has too much good ſenſe. Every thing was then diſcuſſed in a rational manner. You are to be married privately, though not ſecretly, and then go to one of his Lordſhip's country ſeats: and poor little Miſs Green and your brother, who have no houſe of their own, muſt go to one of Sir John's."

"But why, my dear Madam, why all this haſte? why may we not be allowed a little longer time?"

"I could give you a thouſand reaſons," anſwered ſhe, "but that I am tolerably certain *two* or *three* will be more than you can controvert, even with all the logic of genuine coquetry. In the firſt place, you

doubtleſs wiſh to quit the houſe of Mrs. Beaumont,—to whoſe, then, can you with ſuch propriety remove, as to Lord Orville's?"

"Surely, Madam," cried I, "I am not more deſtitute now, than when I thought myſelf an orphan?"

"Your father, my dear," anſwered ſhe, "is willing to ſave the little impoſtor as much of the mortification of her diſgrace as is in his power: now if you immediately take her place, according to your right, as Miſs Belmont, why not all that either of you can do for her, will prevent her being eternally ſtigmatized, as the Bantling of Dame Green, waſh-woman and wet nurſe of Berry Hill, Dorſetſhire. Now ſuch a genealogy will not be very flattering, even to Mr. Macartney, who, all-diſmal as he is, you will find by no means wanting in pride and ſelf-conſequence."

"For the univerſe," interrupted I, "I would not be acceſſary to the degradation you mention; but, ſurely, Madam, I may return to Berry Hill?"

"By no means," ſaid ſhe; "for though compaſſion may make us wiſh to ſave the poor girl the confuſion of an immediate and public fall, yet juſtice demands you ſhould appear, henceforward, in no other light than that of Sir John Belmont's daughter. Beſides, between friends, I, who know the world,

world, can see that half this prodigious delicacy for the little usurper, is the mere result of self-interest; for while *her* affairs are hush't up, Sir John's, you know, are kept from being brought further to light. Now the double marriage we have projected, obviates all rational objections. Sir John will give you, immediately, £.30,000; all settlements, and so forth, will be made for you in the name of Evelina Belmont;—Mr. Macartney will, at the same time, take poor Polly Green,—and yet, at first, it will only be generally known that *a daughter of Sir John Belmont*'s is married."

In this manner, though she did not convince me, yet the quickness of her arguments silenced and perplexed me. I enquired, however, if I might not be permitted to again see my father, or whether I must regard myself as banished his presence for ever?

"My dear," said she, "he does not know you; he concludes that you have been brought up to detest him, and therefore he is rather prepared to dread, than to love you."

This answer made me very unhappy; I wished, most impatiently, to remove his prejudice, and endeavour, by dutiful assiduity, to engage his kindness, yet knew not how to propose seeing him, while conscious he wished to avoid me.

This

This evening, as soon as the company was engaged with cards, Lord Orville exerted his utmost eloquence to reconcile me to this hasty plan: but how was I startled, when he told me that next *Tuesday* was the day appointed by my father to be the most important of my life!

"Next Tuesday!" repeated I, quite out of breath, "Oh my Lord!—"

"My sweet Evelina," said he, "the day which will make me the happiest of mortals, would probably appear awful to you, were it to be deferred a twelvemonth: Mrs. Selwyn has, doubtless, acquainted you with the many motives which, independent of my eagerness, require it to be speedy; suffer, therefore, its acceleration, and generously complete my felicity, by endeavouring to suffer it without repugnance."

"Indeed, my Lord, I would not wilfully raise objections, nor do I desire to appear insensible of the honour of your good opinion;—but there is something in this plan, so very hasty,—so unreasonably precipitate,—besides, I shall have no time to hear from Berry Hill,—and believe me, my Lord, I should be for ever miserable, were I, in an affair so important, to act without the sanction of Mr. Villars' advice."

He offered to wait on you himself; but I told him I had rather write to you. And then he proposed, that, instead of my immediately

diately accompanying him to Lincolnſhire, we ſhould, firſt, paſs a month *at my native Berry Hill.*

This was, indeed, a grateful propoſal to me, and I liſtened to it with undiſguiſed pleaſure. And,—in ſhort, I was obliged to conſent to a compromiſe, in merely deferring the day till Thurſday! He readily undertook to engage my father's concurrence in this little delay, and I beſought him, at the ſame time, to make uſe of his influence to obtain me a ſecond interview, and to repreſent the deep concern I felt in being thus baniſhed his ſight.

He would then have ſpoken of *ſettlements*, but I aſſured him, I was almoſt ignorant even of the word.

And now, my deareſt Sir, what is your opinion of theſe haſty proceedings? believe me, I half regret the ſimple facility with which I have ſuffered myſelf to be hurried into compliance, and, ſhould you ſtart but the ſmalleſt objection, I will yet inſiſt upon being allowed more time.

I muſt now write a conciſe account of the ſtate of my affairs to Howard Grove, and to Madame Duval.

Adieu, deareſt and moſt honoured Sir! every thing, at preſent, depends upon your ſingle deciſion, to which, though I yield in trembling, I yield implicitly.

LETTER

LETTER XIX.

Evelina in continuation.

Oct. 11.

YESTERDAY morning, as soon as breakfast was over, Lord Orville went to the Hotwells, to wait upon my father with my double petition.

Mrs. Beaumont then, in general terms, proposed a walk in the garden. Mrs. Selwyn said she had letters to write, but Lady Louisa arose to accompany her.

I had had some reason to imagine, from the notice with which her Ladyship had honoured me during breakfast, that her brother had acquainted her with my present situation: and her behaviour now confirmed my conjecture; for, when I would have gone up stairs, instead of suffering me, as usual, to pass disregarded, she called after me with an affected surprise, "Miss Anville, don't you walk with us?"

There seemed something so little-minded in this sudden change of conduct, that, from an involuntary motion of contempt, I thanked her, with a coldness like her own, and declined her offer. Yet, observing that she blushed extremely at my refusal, and recollecting

recollecting she was sister to Lord Orville, my indignation subsided, and upon Mrs. Beaumont's repeating the invitation, I accepted it.

Our walk proved extremely dull; Mrs. Beaumont, who never says much, was more silent than usual; Lady Louisa strove in vain to lay aside the restraint and distance she has hitherto preserved; and as to me, I was too conscious of the circumstances to which I owed their attention, to feel either pride or pleasure from receiving it.

Lord Orville was not long absent; he joined us in the garden with a look of gaiety and good-humour that revived us all. "You are just the party," said he, "I wished to see together. Will you, Madam," taking my hand, "allow me the honour of introducing you, by your real name, to two of my nearest relations? Mrs. Beaumont, give me leave to present to you the daughter of Sir John Belmont; a young lady who, I am sure, must long since have engaged your esteem and admiration, though you were a stranger to her birth."

"My Lord," said Mrs. Beaumont, graciously saluting me, "the young lady's rank in life,—your Lordship's recommendation,—or her own merit, would any one of them have been sufficient to have entitled her to my regard; and I hope she has always

ways met with that respect in my house which is so much her due; though, had I been sooner made acquainted with her family, I should, doubtless, have better known how to have secured it."

"Miss Belmont," said Lord Orville, "can receive no lustre from family, whatever she may give to it. Louisa, you will, I am sure, be happy to make yourself an interest in the friendship of Miss Belmont, whom I hope shortly," kissing my hand, and joining it with her Ladyship's, "to have the happiness of presenting to you by yet another name, and by the most endearing of all titles."

I believe it would be difficult to say whose cheeks were, at that moment, of the deepest dye, Lady Louisa's or my own; for the conscious pride with which she has hitherto slighted me, gave to her an embarrassment which equalled the confusion that an introduction so unexpected gave to me. She saluted me, however, and, with a faint smile, said, "I shall esteem myself very happy to profit by the honour of Miss Belmont's acquaintance."

I only courtsied, and we walked on; but it was evident, from the little surprise they expressed, that they had been already informed of the state of the affair.

We were, soon after, joined by more company:

company: and Lord Orville then, in a low voice, took an opportunity to tell me the ſucceſs of his viſit. In the firſt place, Thurſday was agreed to; and, in the ſecond, my father, he ſaid, was much concerned to hear of my uneaſineſs, ſent me his bleſſing, and complied with my requeſt of ſeeing him, with the ſame readineſs he ſhould agree to any other I could make. Lord Orville, therefore, ſettled that I ſhould wait upon him in the evening, and, at his particular requeſt, unaccompanied by Mrs. Selwyn.

This kind meſſage, and the proſpect of ſo ſoon ſeeing him, gave me ſenſations of mixed pleaſure and pain, which wholly occupied my mind till the time of my going to the Hotwell.

Mrs. Beaumont lent me her chariot, and Lord Orville abſolutely inſiſted upon attending me. "If you go alone," ſaid he, "Mrs. Selwyn will certainly be offended; but, if you allow me to conduct you, though ſhe may give the freer ſcope to her raillery, ſhe cannot poſſibly be affronted: and we had much better ſuffer her laughter, than provoke her ſatire."

Indeed, I muſt own I had no reaſon to regret being ſo accompanied; for his converſation ſupported my ſpirits from drooping, and made the ride ſeem ſo ſhort, that

we

we actually ſtopt at my father's door, before I knew we had proceeded ten yards.

He handed me from the carriage, and conducted me to the parlour, at the door of which I was met by Mr. Macartney. "Ah, my dear brother," cried I, "how happy am I to ſee you here!"

He bowed and thanked me. Lord Orville, then, holding out his hand, ſaid, "Mr. Macartney, I hope we ſhall be better acquainted; I promiſe myſelf much pleaſure from cultivating your friendſhip."

"Your Lordſhip does me but too much honour," anſwered Mr. Macartney.

"But where," cried I, "is my ſiſter? for ſo I muſt already call, and always conſider her:—I am afraid ſhe avoids me;—you muſt endeavour, my dear brother, to prepoſſeſs her in my favour, and reconcile her to owning me."

"Oh Madam," cried he, "you are all goodneſs and benevolence! but at preſent I hope you will excuſe her, for I fear ſhe has hardly fortitude ſufficient to ſee you: in a ſhort time, perhaps——"

"In a *very* ſhort time, then," ſaid Lord Orville, "I hope you will yourſelf introduce her, and that we ſhall have the pleaſure of wiſhing you both joy: allow me, my Evelina, to ſay *we*, and permit me, in your name as well as my own, to entreat

that the first guests we shall have the happiness of receiving, may be Mr. and Mrs. Macartney,"

A servant then came to beg I would walk up stairs.

I besought Lord Orville to accompany me; but he feared the displeasure of Sir John, who had desired to see me alone. He led me, however, to the foot of the stairs, and made the kindest efforts to give me courage; but indeed he did not succeed, for the interview appeared to me in all its terrors, and left me no feeling but apprehension.

The moment I reached the landing-place, the drawing-room door was opened, and my father, with a voice of kindness, called out, "My child, is it you?"

"Yes, Sir," cried I, springing forward, and kneeling at his feet, "it is your child, if you will own her!"

He knelt by my side, and folding me in his arms, "Own thee," repeated he, "yes, my poor girl, and Heaven knows with what bitter contrition!" Then raising both himself and me, he brought me into the drawing-room, shut the door, and took me to the window, where, looking at me with great earnestness, "Poor unhappy Caroline!" cried he, and, to my inexpressible concern, he burst into tears. Need I tell you,

you, my dear Sir, how mine flowed at the ſight?

I would again have embraced his knees; but, hurrying from me, he flung himſelf upon a ſopha, and, leaning his face on his arms, ſeemed, for ſome time, abſorbed in bitterneſs of grief.

I ventured not to interrupt a ſorrow I ſo much reſpected, but waited in ſilence, and at a diſtance, till he recovered from its violence. But then it ſeemed, in a moment, to give way to a kind of frantic fury; for, ſtarting ſuddenly, with a ſternneſs which at once ſurpriſed and frightened me. "Child," cried he, "haſt thou yet ſufficiently humbled thy father?—if thou haſt, be contented with this proof of my weakneſs, and no longer force thyſelf into my preſence!"

Thunderſtruck by a command ſo unexpected, I ſtood ſtill and ſpeechleſs, and doubted whether my own ears did not deceive me.

"Oh, go, go!" cried he, paſſionately, "in pity—in compaſſion,—if thou valueſt my ſenſes, leave me,—and for ever!"

"I will, I will," cried I, greatly terrified; and I moved haſtily towards the door: yet ſtopping when I reached it, and, almoſt involuntarily, dropping on my knees, "Vouchſafe," cried I, "oh, Sir,

vouchsafe but once to bless your daughter, and her sight shall never more offend you!"

"Alas," cried he, in a softened voice, "I am not worthy to bless thee!—I am not worthy to call thee daughter!—I am not worthy that the fair light of heaven should visit my eyes!—Oh God! that I could but call back the time ere thou wast born,—or else bury its remembrance in eternal oblivion!"

"Would to Heaven," cried I, "that the sight of me were less terrible to you! that instead of irritating, I could soothe your sorrows!—Oh Sir, how thankfully would I then prove my duty, even at the hazard of my life!"

"Are you so kind?" cried he, gently; "come hither, child,—rise, Evelina;—alas, it is for *me* to kneel, not you—and I *would* kneel,—I would crawl upon the earth,—I would kiss the dust,—could I, by such submission, obtain the forgiveness of the representative of the most injured of women!"

"Oh, Sir," exclaimed I, "that you could but read my heart!—that you could but see the filial tenderness and concern with which it overflows!—you would not then talk thus,—you would not then banish me your presence, and exclude me from your affection!"

"Good

"Good God," cried he, "is it then possible that you do not hate me?—Can the child of the wronged Caroline look at, —and not execrate me? Wast thou not born to abhor, and bred to curse me? did not thy mother bequeath thee her blessing, on condition that thou shouldst detest and avoid me?"

"Oh no, no, no!" cried I, "think not so unkindly of her, nor so hardly of me." I then took from my pocket-book her last letter, and, pressing it to my lips, with a trembling hand, and still upon my knees, I held it out to him.

Hastily snatching it from me, "Great Heaven!" cried he, "'tis her writing—Whence comes this?—who gave it you?—why had I it not sooner?"

I made no answer; his vehemence intimidated me, and I ventured not to move from the suppliant posture in which I had put myself.

He went from me to the window, where his eyes were for some time rivetted upon the direction of the letter, though his hand shook so violently he could hardly hold it. Then, bringing it to me, "Open it,"—cried he,—"for I cannot!"

I had, myself, hardly strength to obey him; but, when I had, he took it back, and walked hastily up and down the room,

as if dreading to read it. At length, turning to me, "Do you know," cried he, "its contents?"

"No, Sir," answered I, "it has never been unsealed."

He then again went to the window, and began reading. Having hastily run it over, he cast up his eyes with a look of desperation; the letter fell from his hand, and he exclaimed, "Yes! thou art sainted!—thou art blessed!—and I am cursed for ever!" He continued some time fixed in this melancholy position; after which, casting himself with violence upon the ground, "Oh wretch," cried he, "unworthy life and light, in what dungeon canst thou hide thy head?"

I could restrain myself no longer; I rose and went to him; I did not dare speak, but with pity and concern unutterable, I wept and hung over him.

Soon after, starting up, he again seized the letter, exclaiming, "Acknowledge thee, Caroline!—yes, with my heart's best blood would I acknowledge thee!—Oh that thou couldst witness the agony of my soul!—Ten thousand daggers could not have wounded me like this letter!"

Then, after again reading it, "Evelina," he cried, "she charges me to receive thee;—wilt thou, in obedience to her will, own

for

for thy father the deſtroyer of thy mother?"

What a dreadful queſtion! I ſhuddered, but could not ſpeak.

"To clear her fame, and receive her child," continued he, looking ſtedfaſtly at the letter, "are the conditions upon which ſhe leaves me her forgiveneſs: her fame, I have already cleared;—and oh how willingly would I take her child to my boſom,—fold her to my heart,—call upon her to mitigate my anguiſh, and pour the balm of comfort on my wounds, were I not conſcious I deſerve not to receive it, and that all my affliction is the reſult of my own guilt!"

It was in vain I attempted to ſpeak; horror and grief took from me all power of utterance.

He then read aloud from the letter, "*Look not like thy unfortunate mother!*—Sweet ſoul, with what bitterneſs of ſpirit haſt thou written?—Come hither, Evelina: Gracious Heaven!" looking earneſtly at me, "never was likeneſs more ſtriking!—the eye,—the face,—the form,—Oh my child, my child!" Imagine, Sir,—for I can never deſcribe my feelings, when I ſaw him ſink upon his knees before me! "Oh dear reſemblance of thy murdered mother!—Oh all that remains of the moſt injured of wo-

men! behold thy father at thy feet!—bending thus lowly to implore you would not hate him;—Oh then, thou repreſentative of my departed wife, ſpeak to me in her name, and ſay that the remorſe which tears my ſoul, tortures me not in vain!

"Oh riſe, riſe, my beloved father," cried I, attempting to aſſiſt him, "I cannot bear to ſee you thus;—reverſe not the law of nature, riſe yourſelf, and bleſs your kneeling daughter!"

"May Heaven bleſs thee, my child!—" cried he, "for *I* dare not." He then roſe, and embracing me moſt affectionately, added, "I ſee, I ſee that thou art all kindneſs, ſoftneſs, and tenderneſs; I need not have feared thee, thou art all the fondeſt father could wiſh, and I will try to frame my mind to leſs painful ſenſations at thy ſight. Perhaps the time may come when I may know the comfort of ſuch a daughter,—at preſent, I am only fit to be alone: dreadful as are my reflections, they ought merely to torment myſelf.—Adieu, my child;—be not angry,—I cannot ſtay with thee,—oh Evelina! thy countenance is a dagger to my heart!—juſt ſo thy mother looked,—juſt ſo—"

Tears and ſighs ſeemed to choak him!—and waving his hand, he would have left me,—but, clinging to him, "Oh, Sir," cried

cried I, "will you so soon abandon me? —am I again an orphan?—oh my dear, my long-lost father, leave me not, I beseech you! take pity on your child, and rob her not of the parent she so fondly hoped would cherish her!"

"You know not what you ask," cried he; "the emotions which now rend my soul are more than my reason can endure: suffer me, then, to leave you,—impute it not to unkindness, but think of me as well as thou canst.—Lord Orville has behaved nobly;—I believe he will make thee happy." Then, again embracing me, "God bless thee, my dear child," cried he, "God bless thee, my Evelina!—endeavour to love,—at least not to hate me,—and to make me an interest in thy filial bosom by thinking of me as thy father."

I could not speak; I kissed his hands on my knees; and then, with yet more emotion, he again blessed me, and hurried out of the room,—leaving me almost drowned in tears.

Oh Sir, all goodness as you are, how much will you feel for your Evelina, during a scene of such agitation! I pray Heaven to accept the tribute of his remorse, and restore him to tranquillity!

When I was sufficiently composed to return to the parlour, I found Lord Orville

waiting for me with the utmoſt anxiety:—and then a new ſcene of emotion, though of a far different nature, awaited me; for I learnt, by Mr. Macartney, that this nobleſt of men had inſiſted the ſo-long-ſuppoſed Miſs Belmont ſhould be conſidered *indeed* as my ſiſter, and as the co-heireſs of my father! though not in *law*, in *juſtice*, he ſays, ſhe ought ever to be treated as the daughter of Sir John Belmont.

Oh Lord Orville!—it ſhall be the ſole ſtudy of my happy life, to expreſs, better than by words, the ſenſe I have of your exalted benevolence, and greatneſs of mind!

LETTER XX.

Evelina in continuation.

Cliſton, Oct. 12th.

THIS morning, early, I received the following letter from Sir Clement Willoughby.

To Miss Anville.

I Have this moment received intelligence that preparations are actually making for your marriage with Lord Orville.

Imagine not that I write with the imbecile idea of rendering those preparations abortive. No, I am not so mad. My sole view is to explain the motive of my conduct in a particular instance, and to obviate the accusation of treachery which may be laid to my charge.

My unguarded behaviour when I last saw you, has, probably, already acquainted you, that the letter I then saw you reading was written by myself. For your further satisfaction, let me have the honour of informing you, that the letter you had designed for Lord Orville, had fallen into my hands.

However I may have been urged on by a passion the most violent that ever warmed the heart of man, I can by no means calmly submit to be stigmatised for an action seemingly so dishonourable; and it is for this reason that I trouble you with my justification.

Lord Orville,—the happy Orville, whom you are so ready to bless,—had made me

believe he loved you not, — nay, that he held you in contempt.

Such were my thoughts of his sentiments of you, when I got possession of the letter you meant to send him; I pretend not to vindicate either the means I used to obtain it, or the action of breaking the seal;—but I was impelled by an impetuous curiosity to discover the terms upon which you wrote to him.

The letter, however, was wholly unintelligible to me, and the perusal of it only added to my perplexity.

A tame suspense I was not born to endure, and I determined to clear my doubts at all hazards and events.

I answered it, therefore, in Orville's name.

The views, which I am now going to acknowledge, must, infallibly, incur your displeasure,—yet I scorn all palliation.

Briefly, then,—I concealed your letter to prevent a discovery of your capacity,—and I wrote you an answer which I hoped would prevent your wishing for any other.

I am well aware of every thing which can be said upon this subject. Lord Orville will, possibly, think himself ill used;—but I am extremely indifferent as to his opinion, nor do I now write by way of offering any apology to him, but merely to make known

to

to yourself the reasons by which I have been governed.

I intend to set off next week for the Continent. Should his Lordship have any commands for me in the mean time, I shall be glad to receive them. I say not this by way of defiance,—I should blush to be suspected of so doing through an indirect channel,—but simply that, if you shew him this letter, he may know I dare defend, as well as excuse my conduct.

CLEMENT WILLOUGHBY.

What a strange letter! how proud and how piqued does its writer appear! To what alternate *meanness* and *rashness* do the passions lead, when reason and self-denial do not oppose them! Sir Clement is conscious he has acted dishonourably, yet the same unbridled vehemence which urged him to gratify a blameable curiosity, will sooner prompt him to risk his life, than confess his misconduct. The rudeness of his manner of writing to me springs from the same cause: the proof he has received of my indifference to him, has stung him to the soul, and he has neither the delicacy nor forbearance to disguise his displeasure.

I determined not to shew this letter to Lord Orville, and thought it most prudent to

to let Sir Clement know I ſhould not. I therefore wrote the following note.

To Sir Clement Willoughby.

Sir,

THE letter you have been pleaſed to addreſs to me, is ſo little calculated to afford Lord Orville any ſatisfaction, that you may depend upon my carefully keeping it from his ſight. I will bear you no reſentment for what is paſt; but I moſt earneſtly entreat, nay implore, that you will not write again, while in your preſent frame of mind, by *any* channel, direct or indirect.

I hope you will have much pleaſure in your propoſed expedition, and I beg leave to aſſure you of my good wiſhes.

Not knowing by what name to ſign, I was obliged to ſend it without any.

The *preparations* which Sir Clement mentions, go on juſt as if your conſent were arrived: it is in vain that I expoſtulate; Lord Orville ſays, ſhould any objections be raiſed, all ſhall be given up, but that, as his hopes forbid him to expect

any, he must proceed as if already assured of your concurrence.

We have had, this afternoon, a most interesting conversation, in which we have traced our sentiments of each other from our first acquaintance. I have made him confess how ill he thought of me, upon my foolish giddiness at Mrs. Stanley's ball; but he flatters me with assurances, that every succeeding time he saw me, I appeared to something less and less disadvantage.

When I expressed my amazement that he could honour with his choice a girl who seemed so infinitely, in *every* respect, beneath his alliance, he frankly owned, that he had fully intended making more minute enquiries into my family and connections, and particularly concerning *those people* he saw me with at Marybone, before he acknowledged his prepossession in my favour: but the suddenness of my intended journey, and the uncertainty of seeing me again, put him quite off his guard, and, "divesting him of prudence, left him nothing but love." These were his words; and yet, he has repeatedly assured me, that his partiality has known no bounds from the time of my residing at Clifton.

* * * * *

Mr.

Mr. Macartney has just been with me, on an embassy from my father. He has sent me his kindest love, and assurances of favour, and desired to know if I am happy in the prospect of changing my situation, and if there is any thing I can name which he can do for me. And, at the same time, Mr. Macartney delivered to me a draught on my father's banker for a thousand pounds, which he insisted that I should receive entirely for my own use, and expend in equipping myself properly for the new rank of life to which I seem destined.

I am sure I need not say how much I was penetrated by this goodness; I wrote my thanks, and acknowledged, frankly, that if I could see *him* restored to tranquillity, my heart would be without a wish.

LETTER XXI.

Evelina in continuation.

Clifton, Oct. 13.

THE time approaches now, when I hope we shall meet,—yet I cannot sleep,—great joy is as restless as sorrow,—and therefore I will continue my journal.

As

As I had never had an opportunity of seeing Bath, a party was formed last night for shewing me that celebrated city; and this morning, after breakfast, we set out in three phaetons. Lady Louisa and Mrs. Beaumont with Lord Merton; Mr. Coverley with Mr. Lovel; and Mrs. Selwyn and myself with Lord Orville.

We had hardly proceeded half a mile, when a gentleman from a post-chaise, which came galloping after us, called out to the servants, "Holla, my Lads,—pray is one Miss Anville in any of them *thing-em-bobs*?"

I immediately recollected the voice of Captain Mirvan, and Lord Orville stopt the phaeton. He was out of the chaise, and with us in a moment. "So, Miss Anville," cried he, "how do you do? so I hear you're Miss Belmont now;—pray how does old Madame French do?"

"Madame Duval," said I, "is, I believe, very well."

"I hope she is in *good case*," said he, winking significantly, "and won't flinch at seeing service: she has laid by long enough to refit and be made tight. And pray how does poor *Monseer* Doleful do? is he as lank-jawed as ever?

"They are neither of them," said I, "in Bristol."

"No!

"No!" cried he, with a look of disappointment, "but surely the old dowager intends coming to the wedding! 'twill be a most excellent opportunity to shew off her best Lyons silk. Besides, I purpose to dance a new-fashioned jig with her. Don't you know when she'll come?"

"I have no reason to expect her at all."

"No!—'Fore George, this here's the worst news I'd wish to hear!—why I've thought of nothing all the way but what trick I should serve her!"

"You have been very obliging!" said I, laughing.

"O, I promise you," cried he, "our Moll would never have wheedled me into this jaunt, if I'd known she was not here; for, to let you into the secret, I fully intended to have treated the old buck with another frolic."

"Did Miss Mirvan, then, persuade you to this journey?"

"Yes, and we've been travelling all night."

"*We!*" cried I: "Is Miss Mirvan, then, with you?"

"What, Molly?—yes, she's in that there chaise."

"Good God, Sir, why did not you tell me sooner?" cried I; and immediately, with

Lord

Lord Orville's assistance, I jumpt out of the phaeton, and ran to the dear girl. Lord Orville opened the chaise-door, and I am sure I need not tell you what unfeigned joy accompanied our meeting.

We both begged we might not be parted during the ride, and Lord Orville was so good as to invite Captain Mirvan into his phaeton.

I think I was hardly ever more rejoiced than at this so seasonable visit from my dear Maria; who had no sooner heard the situation of my affairs, than with the assistance of Lady Howard and her kind mother, she besought her father with such earnestness to consent to the journey, that he had not been able to withstand their united entreaties; though she owned that, had he not expected to have met with Madame Duval, she believes he would not so readily have yielded. They arrived at Mrs. Beaumont's but a few minutes after we were out of sight, and overtook us without much difficulty.

I say nothing of our conversation, because you may so well suppose both the subjects we chose, and our manner of discussing them.

We all stopped at a great hotel, where we were obliged to enquire for a room, as Lady Louisa, *fatigued to death*, desired to

take

take something before we began our rambles.

As soon as the party was assembled, the Captain, abruptly saluting me, said, "So, Miss Belmont, I wish you joy; so I hear you've quarrelled with your new name already?"

"Me!—no, indeed, Sir."

"Then please for to tell me the reason you're in such a hurry to change it."

"Miss Belmont!" cried Mr. Lovel, looking around him with the utmost astonishment, "I beg pardon,—but, if it is not impertinent,—I must beg leave to say, I always understood that Lady's name was Anville."

"'Fore George," cried the Captain, "it runs in my head, I've seen you somewhere before! and now I think on't, pray a'n't you the person I saw at the play one night, and who did n't know, all the time, whether it was a tragedy or a comedy, or a concert of fidlers?"

"I believe, Sir," said Mr. Lovel, stammering, "I had once,—I think—the pleasure of seeing you last spring."

"Ay, and if I live an hundred springs," answered he, "I shall never forget it; by Jingo, it has served me for a most excellent good joke ever since. Well, howsomever, I'm

I'm glad to see you still in the land of the living," shaking him roughly by the hand; "pray, if a body may be so bold, how much a night may you give at present to keep the undertakers aloof?"

"Me, Sir!" said Mr. Lovel, very much discomposed; "I protest I never thought myself in such imminent danger as to—really, Sir, I don't understand you."

"O, you don't!—why then I'll make free for to explain myself. Gentlemen and Ladies, I'll tell you what; do you know this here gentleman, simple as he sits there, pays five shillings a night to let his friends know he's alive!"

"And very cheap too," said Mrs. Selwyn, "if we consider the value of the intelligence."

Lady Louisa, being now refreshed, we proceeded upon our expedition.

The charming city of Bath answered all my expectations. The Crescent, the prospect from it, and the elegant symmetry of the Circus, delighted me. The Parades, I own, rather disappointed me; one of them is scarce preferable to some of the best paved streets in London; and the other, though it affords a beautiful prospect, a charming view of Prior Park and of the Avon, yet wanted something in *itself* of more striking elegance than a mere broad pavement,

pavement, to satisfy the ideas I had formed of it.

At the pump-room, I was amazed at the public exhibition of the ladies in the bath: it is true, their heads are covered with bonnets; but the very idea of being seen, in such a situation, by whoever pleases to look, is indelicate.

"'Fore George," said the Captain, looking into the bath, "this would be a most excellent place for old Madame French to dance a fandango in! By Jingo, I would n't wish for better sport than to swing her round this here pond!"

"She would be very much obliged to you," said Lord Orville, "for so extraordinary a mark of your favour."

"Why, to let you know," answered the Captain, "she hit my fancy mightily; I never took so much to an old tabby before."

"Really, now," cried Mr. Lovel, looking also into the bath, "I must confess it is, to me, very incomprehensible why the ladies chuse that frightful unbecoming dress to bathe in! I have often pondered very seriously upon the subject, but could never hit upon the reason."

"Well, I declare," said Lady Louisa, "I should like of all things to set something new a going; I always hated bathing, because

becauſe one can get no pretty dreſs for it; now do, there's a good creature, try to help me to ſomething."

"Who? me!—O dear Ma'am," ſaid he, ſimpering, "I can't pretend to aſſiſt a perſon of your Ladyſhip's taſte; beſides, I have not the leaſt head for faſhions.—I really don't think I ever invented above three in my life!—but I never had the leaſt turn for dreſs,—never any notion of fancy or elegance."

"O fie, Mr. Lovel! how can you talk ſo?—don't we all know that you lead the *ton* in the *beau monde?* I declare, I think you dreſs better than any body."

"O dear Ma'am, you confuſe me to the laſt degree! *I* dreſs well!—I proteſt I don't think I'm ever fit to be ſeen!—I'm often ſhocked to death to think what a figure I go. If your Ladyſhip will believe me, I was full half an hour this morning thinking what I ſhould put on!"

"Odds my life," cried the Captain, "I wiſh I'd been near you! I warrant I'd have quickened your motions a little! Half an hour thinking what you'd put on! and who the deuce do you think cares the ſnuff of a candle whether you've any thing on or not?"

"O pray, Captain," cried Mrs. Selwyn, "don't be angry with the gentleman for *thinking*,

thinking, whatever be the cauſe, for I aſſure you he makes no common practice of offending in that way."

"Really, Ma'am, you're prodigiouſly kind," ſaid Mr. Lovel, angrily.

"Pray, now," ſaid the Captain, "did you ever get a ducking in that there place yourſelf?"

"A ducking, Sir!" repeated Mr. Lovel; "I proteſt I think that's rather an odd term!—but if you mean a *bathing*, it is an honour I have had many times."

"And pray, if a body may be ſo bold, what do you do with that frizle-frize top of your own? Why I'll lay you what you will, there is fat and greaſe enough on your crown, to buoy you up, if you were to go in head downwards."

"And I don't know," cried Mrs. Selwyn, "but that might be the eaſieſt way, for I'm ſure it would be the lighteſt."

"For the matter of that there," ſaid the Captain, "you muſt make him a ſoldier, before you can tell which is lighteſt, head or heels. Howſomever, I'd lay ten pounds to a ſhilling, I could whiſk him ſo dexterouſly over into the pool, that he ſhould light plump upon his foretop, and turn round like a tetotum."

"Done!" cried Lord Merton; "I take your odds!"

"Will

"Will you?" returned he; "why then, 'fore George, I'd do it as soon as say Jack Robinson."

"He, he!" faintly laughed Mr. Lovel, as he moved abruptly from the window; "'pon honour, this is pleasant enough; but I don't see what right any body has to lay wagers about one, without one's consent."

"There, Lovel, you are out," cried Mr. Coverley; "any man may lay what wager about you he will; your consent is nothing to the purpose: he may lay that your nose is a sky-blue, if he pleases."

"Ay," said Mrs. Selwyn, "or that your mind is more adorned than your person;—or any absurdity whatsoever."

"I protest," said Mr. Lovel, "I think it's a very disagreeable privilege, and I must beg that nobody may take such a liberty with *me*."

"Like enough you may," cried the Captain; "but what's that to the purpose? suppose I've a mind to lay that you've never a tooth in your head?—pray, how will you hinder me?"

"You'll allow me, at least, Sir, to take the liberty of asking how you'll *prove* it?"

"How?—why, by knocking them all down your throat."

"Knocking them all down my throat, Sir!" repeated Mr. Lovel, with a look of horror, "I proteſt I never heard any thing ſo ſhocking in my life; and I muſt beg leave to obſerve, that no wager, in my opinion, could juſtify ſuch a barbarous action."

Here Lord Orville interfered, and hurried us to our carriages.

We returned in the ſame order we came. Mrs. Beaumont invited all the party to dinner, and has been ſo obliging as to beg Miſs Mirvan may continue at her houſe during her ſtay. The Captain will lodge at the Wells.

The firſt half-hour after our return, was devoted to hearing Mr. Lovel's apologies for dining in his riding-dreſs.

Mrs. Beaumont then, addreſſing herſelf to Miſs Mirvan and me, enquired how we liked Bath?

"I hope," ſaid Mr. Lovel, "the Ladies do not call this ſeeing Bath."

"No?—what ſhould ail 'em?" cried the Captain; "do you ſuppoſe they put their eyes in their pockets?"

"No, Sir; but I fancy you will find no perſon,—that is, no perſon of any condition,—call going about a few places in a morning *ſeeing Bath*."

"Mayhap, then," ſaid the literal Captain, "you think we ſhould ſee it better by going about at midnight?"

"No, Sir, no," ſaid Mr. Lovel, with a ſupercilious ſmile, "I perceive you don't underſtand me,—*we* ſhould never call it *ſeeing Bath*, without going at the right ſeaſon."

"Why, what a plague, then," demanded he, "can you only ſee at one ſeaſon of the year?"

Mr. Lovel again ſmiled; but ſeemed ſuperior to making any anſwer.

"The Bath amuſements," ſaid Lord Orville, "have a ſameneſs in them, which, after a ſhort time, renders them rather inſipid: but the greateſt objection that can be made to the place, is the encouragement it gives to gameſters."

"Why I hope, my Lord, you would not think of aboliſhing *gaming*," cried Lord Merton; "'tis the very *zeſt* of life! Devil take me if I could live without it!"

"I am ſorry for it," ſaid Lord Orville, gravely, and looking at Lady Louiſa.

"Your Lordſhip is no judge of this ſubject," continued the other;—"but if once we could get you to a gaming-table, you'd never be happy away from it."

"I hope, my Lord," cried Lady Louisa, "that nobody *here* ever occasions your quitting it."

"Your Ladyship," said Lord Merton, recollecting himself, "has power to make me quit any thing."

"Except *herself*," said Mr. Coverley. "Egad, my Lord, I think I've helpt you out there."

"You men of wit, Jack," answered his Lordship, "are always ready;—for my part, I don't pretend to any talents that way."

"Really, my Lord?" asked the sarcastic Mrs. Selwyn; "well, that is wonderful, considering success would be so much in your power."

"Pray, Ma'am," said Mr. Lovel to Lady Louisa, "has your Ladyship heard the news?"

"News!—what news?"

"Why the report circulating at the Wells concerning a certain person?"

"O Lord, no; pray tell me what it is!"

"O no, Ma'am, I beg your La'ship will excuse me; 'tis a profound secret, and I would not have mentioned it, if I had not thought you knew it."

"Lord, now, how can you be so monstrous?—I declare, now, you're a provoking

voking creature! But come, I know you'll tell me;—won't you, now?"

"Your La'ſhip knows I am but too happy to obey you; but 'pon honour I can't ſpeak a word, if you won't all promiſe me the moſt inviolable ſecrecy."

"I wiſh you'd wait for that from me," ſaid the Captain, "and I'll give you my word you'd be dumb for one while. Secrecy, quoth a!—'Fore George, I wonder you a'n't aſhamed to mention ſuch a word, when you talk of telling it to a woman. Though for the matter of that, I'd as lieve blab it to the whole ſex at once, as to go for to tell it to ſuch a thing as you."

"Such a thing as me, Sir!" ſaid Mr. Lovel, letting fall his knife and fork, and looking very important: "I really have not the honour to underſtand your expreſſion."

"It's all one for that," ſaid the Captain; "you may have it explained whenever you like it."

"'Pon honour, Sir," returned Mr. Lovel, "I muſt take the liberty to tell you, that I ſhould be extremely offended, but that I ſuppoſe it to be ſome ſea-phraſe; and therefore I'll let it paſs without further notice."

Lord Orville, then, to change the diſ-

courſe, aſked Miſs Mirvan if ſhe ſhould ſpend the enſuing winter in London?

"No, to be ſure," ſaid the Captain, "what ſhould ſhe for? ſhe ſaw all that was to be ſeen before."

"Is London, then," ſaid Mr. Lovel, ſmiling at Lady Louiſa, "only to be regarded as a *ſight?*"

"Why pray, Mr. Wiſeacre, how are you pleaſed for to regard it yourſelf?—Anſwer me to that?"

"O Sir, *my* opinion, I fancy you would hardly find intelligible. I don't underſtand *ſea-phraſes* enough to define it to your comprehenſion. Does n't your La'ſhip think the taſk would be rather difficult?"

"O Lard, yes," cried Lady Louiſa, "I declare I'd as ſoon teach my parrot to talk Welch."

"Ha! ha! ha! admirable!—'Pon honour your La'ſhip's quite in luck to-day;—but that, indeed, your La'ſhip is every day. Though to be ſure, it is but candid to acknowledge, that the gentlemen of the ocean have a ſet of ideas, as well as a dialect, ſo oppoſite to *ours*, that it is by no means ſurpriſing *they* ſhould regard London as a mere *ſhew*, that may be ſeen by being *looked at*. Ha! ha! ha!"

"Ha! ha!" echoed Lady Louiſa: "Well,

"Well, I declare you are the drolleſt creature!"

"He! he! 'pon honour I can't help laughing at the conceit of *ſeeing London* in a few weeks!"

"And what a plague ſhould hinder you?" cried the Captain; "do you want to ſpend a day in every ſtreet?"

Here again Lady Louiſa and Mr. Lovel interchanged ſmiles.

"Why, I warrant you, if I had the ſhewing it, I'd haul you from St. James's to Wapping the very firſt morning."

The ſmiles were now, with added contempt, repeated; which the Captain obſerving, looked very fiercely at Mr. Lovel, and ſaid, "Hark'ee, my ſpark, none of your grinning! — 'tis a lingo I don't underſtand; and if you give me any more of it, I ſhall go near to lend you a box o' the ear."

"I proteſt, Sir," ſaid Mr. Lovel, turning extremely pale, "I think it's taking a very particular liberty with a perſon, to talk to one in ſuch a ſtyle as this!"

"It's like you may," returned the Captain; "but give a good gulp and I'll warrant you'll ſwallow it." Then, calling for a glaſs of ale, with a very provoking and ſignificant nod, he drank to his eaſy digeſtion.

Mr. Lovel made no anſwer, but looked extremely ſullen: and ſoon after, we left the gentlemen to themſelves.

I had then two letters delivered to me; one from Lady Howard and Mrs. Mirvan, which contained the kindeſt congratulations; and the other from Madame Duval, —but not a word from *you*,—to my no ſmall ſurpriſe and concern.

Madame Duval ſeems greatly rejoiced at my late intelligence: a violent cold, ſhe ſays, prevents her coming to Briſtol. The Branghtons, ſhe tells me, are all well; Miſs Polly is ſoon to be married to Mr. Brown, but Mr. Smith has changed his lodgings, "which," ſhe adds, "has made the houſe extremely dull. However, that's not the worſt news; *pardi*, I wiſh it was! but I've been uſed like nobody,—for Monſieur Du Bois has had the baſeneſs to go back to France without me." In concluſion, ſhe aſſures me, as you prognoſticated ſhe would, that I ſhall be ſole heireſs of all ſhe is worth, when Lady Orville.

At tea-time, we were joined by all the gentlemen but Captain Mirvan, who went to the hotel where he was to ſleep, and made his daughter accompany him, to ſeparate her *trumpery*, as he called it, from his cloaths.

As ſoon as they were gone, Mr. Lovel, who

who ſtill appeared extremely ſulky, ſaid, "I proteſt, I never ſaw ſuch a vulgar, abuſive fellow in my life, as that Captain: 'pon honour, I believe he came here for no purpoſe in the world but to pick a quarrel; however, for my part, I vow I won't humour him."

"I declare," cried Lady Louiſa, "he put me in a monſtrous fright,—I never heard any body talk ſo ſhocking in my life!"

"I think," ſaid Mrs. Selwyn, with great ſolemnity, "he threatened to box your ears, Mr. Lovel,—did not he?"

"Really, Ma'am," ſaid Mr. Lovel, colouring, "if one was to mind every thing thoſe low kind of people ſay,—one ſhould never be at reſt for one impertinence or other,—ſo I think the beſt way is to be above taking any notice of them."

"What," ſaid Mrs. Selwyn, with the ſame gravity, "and ſo receive the blow in ſilence!"

During this diſcourſe, I heard the Captain's chaiſe ſtop at the door, and ran down ſtairs to meet Maria. She was alone, and told me that her father, who, ſhe was ſure, had ſome ſcheme in agitation againſt Mr. Lovel, had ſent her on before him. We continued in the parlour till his return, and were joined by Lord Orville, who begged

me not to insist on a patience so unnatural, as submitting to be excluded our society. And let me, my dear Sir, with a grateful heart let me own, I never before passed half an hour in such perfect felicity.

I believe we were all sorry when the Captain returned; yet his inward satisfaction, from however different a cause, did not seem inferior to what ours had been. He chucked Maria under the chin, rubbed his hands, and was scarce able to contain the fullness of his glee. We all attended him to the drawing-room, where, having composed his countenance, without any previous attention to Mrs. Beaumont, he marched up to Mr. Lovel, and abruptly said, "Pray have you e'er a brother in these here parts?"

"Me, Sir?—no, thank Heaven, I'm free from all incumbrances of that sort."

"Well," cried the Captain, "I met a person just now, so like you, I could have sworn he had been your twin-brother."

"It would have been a most singular pleasure to me," said Mr. Lovel, "if I also could have seen him; for, really, I have not the least notion what sort of a person I am, and I have a prodigious curiosity to know."

Just then, the Captain's servant opening the

the door, said, "A little gentleman below desires to see one Mr. Lovel."

"Beg him to walk up stairs," said Mrs. Beaumont. "But pray what is the reason William is out of the way?"

The man shut the door without any answer.

"I can't imagine who it is," said Mr. Lovel; "I recollect no little gentleman of my acquaintance now at Bristol,—except, indeed, the Marquis of Charlton,—but I don't much fancy it can be him. Let me see, who else is there so very little?"—

A confused noise among the servants now drew all eyes towards the door; the impatient Captain hastened to open it, and then, clapping his hands, call'd out, "'Fore George, 'tis the same person I took for your relation!"

And then, to the utter astonishment of every body but himself, he hauled into the room a monkey! full dressed, and extravagantly *à-la-mode!*

The dismay of the company was almost general. Poor Mr. Lovel seemed thunderstruck with indignation and surprise; Lady Louisa began a scream, which for some time was incessant; Miss Mirvan and I jumped involuntarily upon the seats of our chairs; Mrs. Beaumont herself followed our example; Lord Orville placed himself before

me as a guard; and Mrs. Selwyn, Lord Merton, and Mr. Coverley, burſt into a loud, immoderate, ungovernable fit of laughter, in which they were joined by the Captain, till, unable to ſupport himſelf, he rolled on the floor.

The firſt voice which made it's way through this general noiſe, was that of Lady Louiſa, which her fright and ſcreaming rendered extremely ſhrill. "Take it away!" cried ſhe, "take the monſter away,—I ſhall faint, I ſhall faint if you don't!"

Mr. Lovel, irritated beyond endurance, angrily demanded of the Captain what he meant?

"Mean?" cried the Captain, as ſoon as he was able to ſpeak, "why only to ſhew you in your proper colours." Then riſing, and pointing to the monkey, "Why now, Ladies and Gentlemen, I'll be judged by you all!—Did you ever ſee any thing more like? Odds my life, if it was n't for this here tail, you would n't know one from t'other."

"Sir," cried Mr. Lovel, ſtamping, "I ſhall take a time to make you feel my wrath."

"Come, now," continued the regardleſs Captain, "juſt for the fun's ſake, duff your coat and waiſtcoat, and ſwop with Monſieur *Grinagain* here, and I'll warrant you'll not know yourſelf which is which."

"Not

"Not know myself from a monkey?—I assure you, Sir, I'm not to be used in this manner, and I won't bear it,—curse me if I will!"

"Why heyday," cried the Captain, "what, is Master in a passion?—well, don't be angry,—come, he sha'n't hurt you;—here, shake a paw with him,—why he'll do you no harm, man!—come, kiss and friends!"—

"Who I?" cried Mr. Lovel, almost mad with vexation, "as I'm a living creature, I would not touch him for a thousand worlds!"

"Send him a challenge," cried Mr. Coverley, "and I'll be your second."

"Ay, do," said the Captain, "and I'll be second to my friend Monsieur Clapperclaw here. Come, to it at once!—tooth and nail!"

"God forbid!" cried Mr. Lovel, retreating, "I would sooner trust my person with a mad bull!"

"I don't like the looks of him myself," said Lord Merton, "for he grins most horribly."

"Oh I'm frightened out of my senses!" cried Lady Louisa, "take him away, or I shall die!"

"Captain, said Lord Orville, "the ladies

ladies are alarmed, and I must beg you would send the monkey away."

"Why, where can be the mighty harm of one monkey more than another?" answered the Captain; "howsomever, if it's agreeable to the ladies, suppose we turn them out together?"

"What do you mean by that, Sir?" cried Mr. Lovel, lifting up his cane.

"What do *you* mean?" cried the Captain, fiercely: "be so good as to down with your cane."

Poor Mr. Lovel, too much intimidated to stand his ground, yet too much enraged to submit, turned hastily round, and, forgetful of consequences, vented his passion by giving a furious blow to the monkey.

The creature darting forwards, sprung instantly upon him, and clinging round his neck, fastened his teeth to one of his ears.

I was really sorry for the poor man, who, though an egregious fop, had committed no offence that merited such chastisement.

It was impossible, now, to distinguish whose screams were loudest, those of Mr. Lovel, or of the terrified Lady Louisa, who, I believe, thought her own turn was approaching: but the unrelenting Captain roared with joy.

Not so Lord Orville: ever humane, generous, and benevolent, he quitted his charge, who he saw was wholly out of danger,

and

and seizing the monkey by the collar, made him loosen the ear, and then, with a sudden swing, flung him out of the room, and shut the door.

Poor Mr. Lovel, almost fainting with terror, sunk upon the floor, crying out, "Oh I shall die, I shall die!—Oh I'm bit to death!"

"Captain Mirvan," said Mrs. Beaumont, with no little indignation, "I must own I don't perceive the wit of this action; and I am sorry to have such cruelty practised in my house."

"Why, Lord, Ma'am," said the Captain, when his rapture abated sufficiently for speech, "how could I tell they'd fall out so?—by Jingo, I brought him to be a messmate for t'other."

"Egad," said Mr. Coverley, "I would not have been served so for a thousand pounds!"

"Why then there's the odds of it," said the Captain, "for you see he is served so for nothing. But come" (turning to Mr. Lovel) "be of good heart, all may end well yet, and you and *Monseer* Longtail be as good friends as ever."

"I'm surprised, Mrs. Beaumont," cried Mr. Lovel, starting up, "that you can suffer a person under your roof to be treated so inhumanly."

"What

"What argufies ſo many words?" ſaid the unfeeling Captain, "it is but a ſlit of the ear; it only looks as if you had been in the pillory."

"Very true," added Mrs. Selwyn, "and who knows but it may acquire you the credit of being an anti-miniſterial writer?"

"I proteſt," cried Mr. Lovel, looking ruefully at his dreſs, "my new riding-ſuit's all over blood!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" cried the Captain; "ſee what comes of ſtudying for an hour what you ſhall put on."

Mr. Lovel then walked to the glaſs, and looking at the place, exclaimed, "Oh Heaven, what a monſtrous wound! my ear will never be fit to be ſeen again!"

"Why then," ſaid the Captain, "you muſt hide it;—'tis but wearing a wig."

"A wig!" repeated the affrighted Mr. Lovel, "*I* wear a wig?—no, not if you would give me a thouſand pounds an hour!"

"I declare," ſaid Lady Louiſa, "I never heard ſuch a ſhocking propoſal in my life!"

Lord Orville then, ſeeing no proſpect that the altercation would ceaſe, propoſed to the Captain to walk. He aſſented; and having

having given Mr. Lovel a nod of exultation, accompanied his Lordſhip down ſtairs.

"'Pon honour," ſaid Mr. Lovel, the moment the door was ſhut, "that fellow is the greateſt brute in nature! he ought not to be admitted into a civilized ſociety."

"Lovel," ſaid Mr. Coverley, affecting to whiſper, "you muſt certainly pink him: you muſt not put up with ſuch an affront."

"Sir," ſaid Mr. Lovel, "with any common perſon, I ſhould not deliberate an inſtant; but, really, with a fellow who has done nothing but fight all his life, 'pon honour, Sir, I can't think of it!"

"Lovel," ſaid Lord Merton, in the ſame voice, "you *muſt* call him to account."

"Every man," ſaid he, pettiſhly, "is the beſt judge of his own affairs, and I don't aſk the honour of any perſon's advice."

"Egad, Lovel," ſaid Mr. Coverley, "you're in for it!—you can't poſſibly be off!"

"Sir," cried he, very impatiently, "upon any proper occaſion, I ſhould be as ready to ſhew my courage as any body;—but as to fighting for ſuch a trifle as this,—I proteſt I ſhould bluſh to think of it!"

"A trifle!" cried Mrs. Selwyn; "good Heaven!

Heaven! and have you made this aſtoniſhing riot about a *trifle?*"

"Ma'am," anſwered the poor wretch, in great confuſion, "I did not know at firſt but that my cheek might have been bit:—but as 'tis no worſe, why it does not a great deal ſignify. Mrs. Beaumont, I have the honour to wiſh you good evening; I'm ſure my carriage muſt be waiting." And then, very abruptly, he left the room.

What a commotion has this miſchief-loving Captain raiſed! Were I to remain here long, even the ſociety of my dear Maria could ſcarce compenſate for the diſturbances which he excites.

When he returned, and heard of the quiet exit of Mr. Lovel, his triumph was intolerable. "I think, I think," cried he, "I have peppered him well! I'll warrant he won't give an hour to-morrow morning to ſettling what he ſhall put on; why his coat," turning to me, "would be a moſt excellent match for old Madame Furbelow's beſt Lyons ſilk! 'Fore George, I'd deſire no better ſport, than to have that there old cat here, to go her ſnacks!"

All the company then, Lord Orville, Miſs Mirvan, and myſelf excepted, played at cards, and *we*—oh how much better did we paſs our time!

While we were engaged in a moſt delightful

ful converſation, a ſervant brought me a letter, which he told me had, by ſome accident, been miſlaid. Judge of my feelings, when I ſaw, my deareſt Sir, your revered hand-writing! My emotions ſoon betrayed to Lord Orville whom the letter was from; the importance of the contents he well knew, and, aſſuring me I ſhould not be ſeen by the card-players, he beſought me to open it without delay.

Open it, indeed I did,—but read it I could not;—the willing, yet aweful conſent you have granted,—the tenderneſs of your expreſſions,—the certainty that no obſtacle remained to my eternal union with the loved owner of my heart, gave me ſenſations too various, and though joyful, too little placid for obſervation. Finding myſelf unable to proceed, and blinded by the tears of gratitude and delight, which ſtarted into my eyes, I gave over the attempt of reading, till I retired to my own room: and, having no voice to anſwer the enquiries of Lord Orville, I put the letter into his hands, and left it to ſpeak both for me and itſelf.

Lord Orville was himſelf affected by your kindneſs; he kiſſed the letter as he returned it, and, preſſing my hand affectionately to his heart, "You are now," (ſaid he, in a low voice) "all my own! Oh my Evelina, how will my ſoul find room for its happineſs?

ness?—it seems already bursting!" I could make no reply; indeed I hardly spoke another word the rest of the evening; so little talkative is the fullness of contentment.

O my dearest Sir, the thankfulness of my heart I must pour forth at our meeting, when, at your feet, my happiness receives its confirmation from your blessing, and when my noble-minded, my beloved Lord Orville, presents to you the highly-honoured and thrice-happy Evelina.

A few lines I will endeavour to write on Thursday, which shall be sent off express, to give you, should nothing intervene, yet more certain assurance of our meeting.

Now then, therefore, for the first—and probably the last time I shall ever own the name, permit me to sign myself,

Most dear Sir,

Your gratefully affectionate,

EVELINA BELMONT.

Lady Louisa, at her own particular desire, will be present at the ceremony, as well as Miss Mirvan and Mrs. Selwyn: Mr. Macartney will, the same morning, be united to my foster-sister, and my father himself will give us both away.

LETTER

LETTER XXII.

Mr. Villars to Evelina.

EVERY wish of my soul is now fulfilled—for the felicity of my Evelina is equal to her worthiness!

Yes, my child, thy happiness is engraved, in golden characters, upon the tablets of my heart! and their impression is indelible; for, should the rude and deep-searching hand of Misfortune attempt to pluck them from their repository, the fleeting fabric of life would give way, and in tearing from my vitals the nourishment by which they are supported, she would but grasp at a shadow insensible to her touch.

Give thee my consent?—Oh thou joy, comfort, and pride of my life, how cold is that word to express the fervency of my approbation! yes, I do indeed give thee my consent, and so thankfully, that, with the humblest gratitude to Providence, I would seal it with the remnant of my days.

Hasten, then, my love, to bless me with thy presence, and to receive the blessings with which my fond heart overflows!—And, oh my Evelina, hear and assist in one only, humble, but ardent prayer which yet animates my devotions: that the height of

bliss

bliſs to which thou art riſing may not render thee giddy, but that the purity of thy mind may form the brighteſt ſplendor of thy proſperity!—and that the weak and aged frame of thy almoſt idolizing parent, nearly worn out by time, paſt afflictions, and infirmities, may yet be able to ſuſtain a meeting with all its better part holds dear; and then, that all the wounds which the former ſeverity of fortune inflicted, may be healed and purified by the ultimate conſolation of pouring forth my dying words in bleſſings on my child!—cloſing theſe joy-ſtreaming eyes in her preſence, and breathing my laſt faint ſighs in her loved arms!

Grieve not, oh child of my care, grieve not at the inevitable moment; but may thy own end be equally propitious! Oh may'ſt thou, when full of days, and full of honour, ſink down as gently to reſt,—be loved as kindly, watched as tenderly as thy happy father! And may'ſt thou, when thy glaſs is run, be ſweetly, but not bitterly mourned, by ſome remaining darling of thy affections, —ſome yet ſurviving Evelina!

ARTHUR VILLARS.

LETTER

LETTER XXIII.

Evelina to the Rev. Mr. Villars.

ALL is over, my dearest Sir, and the fate of your Evelina is decided! This morning, with fearful joy, and trembling gratitude, she united herself for ever with the object of her dearest, her eternal affection.

I have time for no more; the chaise now waits which is to conduct me to dear Berry Hill, and to the arms of the best of men.

EVELINA.

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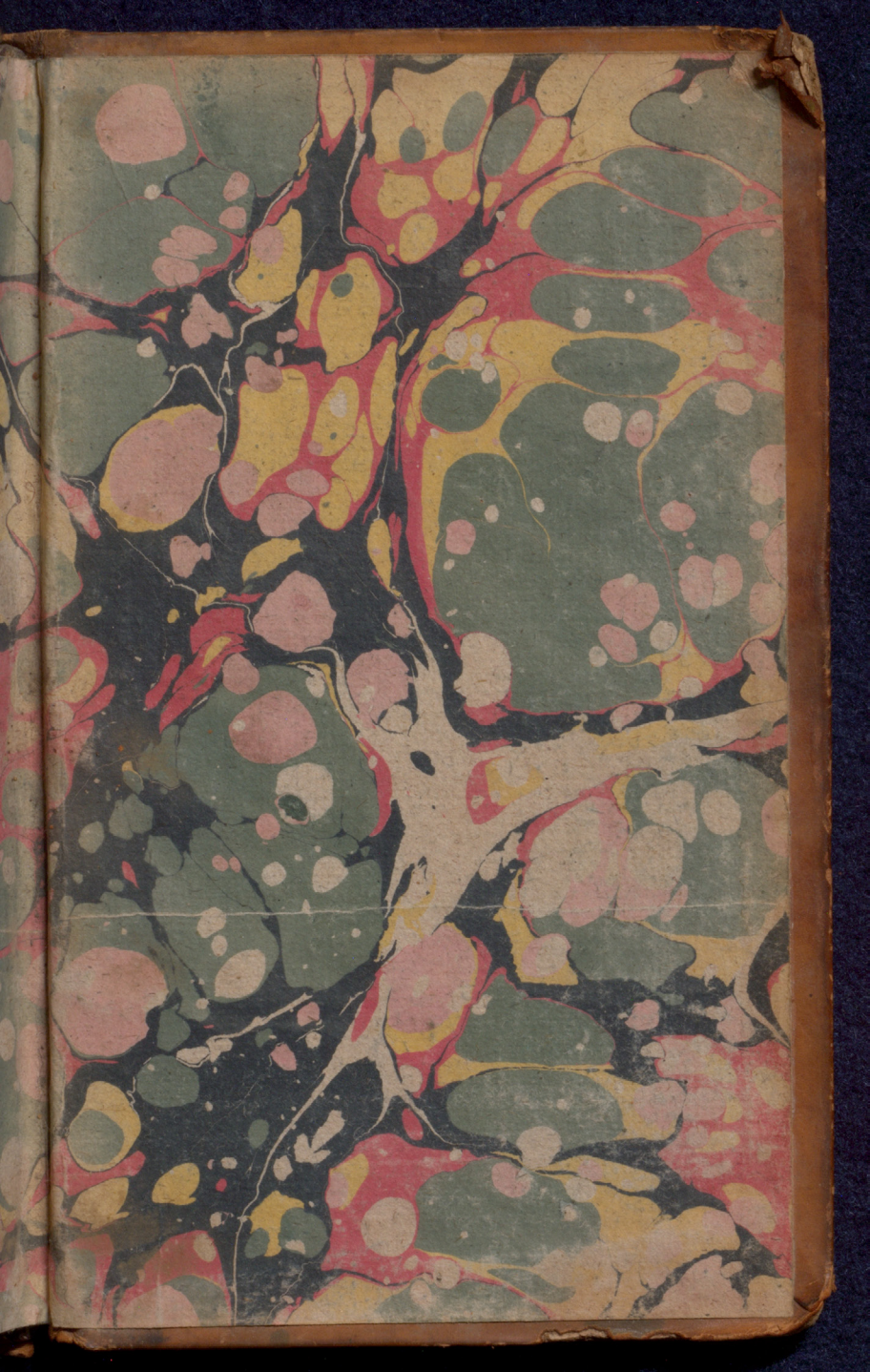
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